

Educational Visits Policy

Legal framework

Under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 employers are responsible for the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees. Employers are also under a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of anyone else on the premises or anyone who may be affected by their activities. This includes participants in off-site visits.

Where the document refers to the responsibility of the employer, this refers to the Education Service for community schools and Governing Bodies for Aided and Foundation Schools.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, made under the 1974 Act, require employers to:

- assess the risks of activities (see the Management of Health and Safety Section of the LEA's Health, Safety and Risk Management Handbook);
- introduce measures to control those risks;
- tell their employees about these measures.

Also under the Health and Safety legislation employees must:

- take reasonable care of their own and others health and safety;
- co-operate with their employers over safety matters;
- carry out activities in accordance with training and instructions;
- inform the employer of any serious risks.

These duties apply to all school and youth service visits. Staff in charge of pupils/young people also have a common law duty to act as any reasonably prudent parent would do in the same circumstances.

Responsibilities of the Education Service/ Governing Bodies of Aided and Foundation Schools

Education Services and Governing Bodies where they are the employer have the following main roles:

- provide written guidelines for governors, Headteachers, teachers and youth workers including advice on risk assessment;
- assess proposals for certain types of visit;
- provide emergency telephone contact for the duration of the visit where necessary;
- ensure training needs have been addressed;
- provide access to named staff for advice;
- maintain appropriate insurance cover;
- have in place procedures to monitor and review safety during off-site visits and activities.

Governing bodies of all types of school should:

- ensure that the visit has a specific and stated objective;
- ensure that the Headteacher shows how their plans comply with regulations and guidelines, including the schools/youth club's health and safety policy document and, where applicable, the LEA's; and that the Headteacher reports back after the visit;
- ensure that they are informed about less routine visits well in advance;
- assess proposals for certain types of visit, as per the approval protocol paragraph and submit certain types of visit to the LA for approval in line with that protocol (County and Controlled Schools only).

Responsibilities of the Headteacher

Headteachers should ensure that visits comply with regulations and guidelines provided by the Education Service or Governing Body and the school's own health and safety policy. Headteachers should ensure that the group leader is competent to monitor the risks throughout the visit.

Headteachers should be clear about their role if taking part in the visit as a group member/supervisor. They should follow the instructions of the group leader who will have sole charge of the visit.

Headteachers should ensure that:

- adequate child protection procedures are in place;
- all necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins;
- 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/young people have been considered;
- the group leader has experience in supervising the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively;
- for school led activities the group leader or another teacher/worker 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/worker supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise children, ratio of supervisors to pupils/young people is appropriate.
- the Education Service or governing body has approved the visit, if appropriate;
- parents have signed consent forms;
- arrangements have been made for the medical needs and special educational needs of all the pupils/young people;
- adequate first-aid provision will be available;
- the mode of travel is appropriate;
- travel times out and back are known including pick-up and drop-off points;
- 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 (this may be the Headteacher/ Youth worker) and the group leader has details;
- the group leader, group supervisors and nominated contact have a copy of the agreed emergency procedures;
- the group leader, group supervisors and nominated contact have the names of all the adults and pupils/young people travelling in the group, and the contact details of parents and the teachers and other supervisors' next of kin and a list of names in each vehicle;
- there is a contingency plan for any delays including a late return home and the Head teacher is informed.

Responsibilities of the group leader

For the purposes of this guidance, the group leader will be the person appointed by the Headteacher to be in control of the trip throughout its duration and should not be taken to mean any specialist instructors who may be used as part of the trip.

The group leader should have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit and should have regard to the health and safety of the group. The group leader should have been appointed or approved by the Headteacher or the governing body. The group leader should:

- ensure approval for the visit is obtained well in advance, following the Education Service or in Aided and Foundation schools the Governors, protocol for approving visits;
- appoint a deputy;

- clearly define each group supervisors role and ensure all tasks have been assigned;
- be able to control and lead pupils/young people of the relevant age range;
- for school led activities be suitably competent to instruct pupils/young people in the activity and be familiar with the location/ centre where the activity will take place.
- be aware of child protection issues;
- ensure that adequate first-aid provision will be available;
- 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 the Headteacher where adjustments may be necessary;
- ensure that teachers/workers and other supervisors are fully aware of what the proposed visit involves;
- have enough information on the pupils/young people proposed for the visit to assess their suitability or be satisfied that their suitability has been assessed and confirmed;
- ensure the ratio of supervisors to pupils/young people is appropriate for the needs of the group.
- consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health or safety of the pupils/young people is unacceptable and have in place procedures for such an eventuality;
- ensure that group supervisors have details of the school contact;
- ensure that group supervisors and the school contact have a copy of the emergency procedures;
- ensure that the groups teachers/workers and other supervisors have the details of pupils/ young people special educational or medical needs which will be necessary for them to carry out their tasks effectively;
- observe the guidance set out for teachers/ workers and other adults below.

Responsibilities of teachers/workers

Teachers/workers on school-led visits act as employees of the Education Service or of the governing body, whether the visit takes place within normal hours or outside those hours, by agreement with the Headteacher and governors.

Teachers/workers must do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any reasonable parent would do 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 or safety of the pupils/young people in their charge is unacceptable.

Responsibilities of adult volunteers

Volunteer adults (eg, parents, governors or others) on the visit should be clear about their roles and responsibilities during the visit. Volunteer adults acting as supervisors must:

- do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group;
- not be left in sole charge of pupils/young people except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment;
- follow the instructions of the group leader and teacher/worker supervisors and help with control and discipline;
- speak to the group leader or teacher/worker supervisors if concerned about the health or safety of pupils/young people at any time during the visit.

Responsibilities of activity staff

Whilst the group leader is responsible for the pastoral care of the pupils/young people, they may delegate the responsibility for the safety of specific activities to appropriate qualified and competent staff.

These may be staff of a residential centre or activity staff employed by the day or session

Responsibilities of pupils/young people

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

- not take unnecessary risks;
- follow the instructions of the leader and other supervisors including those at the venue of the visit;
- dress and behave sensibly and responsibly;
- if abroad be sensitive to local codes and customs;
- look out for anything that might hurt or threaten themselves or anyone in the group and tell the group leader or supervisor about it.

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

Responsibilities of parents/carers

Parents should be able to make an informed decision on whether their child should go on the visit. The group leader should ensure that parents are given sufficient information in writing and are invited to any briefing sessions.

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. Parents should also be asked to agree the arrangements for sending a pupil home early and who will meet the cost.

Special arrangements may be necessary for parents for whom English is a second language.

Parents will need to:

- provide the group leader with emergency contact number(s);
- 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 (usually by means of the consent form)

Any further information, please see the EVC procedure forms from Derbyshire LA.

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