

Procedures for Educational Visits

Principles

In school we aim to provide a rich learning environment for all children. This complements the learning environment created by parents in the home and by family visits. However rich the classroom environment may be, it can be dramatically enhanced by learning outside the classroom. When planning for learning outside the classroom, we take into consideration the needs of all our children to ensure that such activities do not discriminate against any child irrespective of ability, ethnicity, sex, gender, religious belief or sexual orientation.

Excursions must be carefully planned and structured to achieve maximum benefit. These excursions take many forms and will include:

- walks around the school grounds,
- walks in the local town,
- visits around local areas,
- visits to surrounding villages and/or places of interest (e.g. museums, Roman Baths),
- day visits further a field, and
- residential visits, normally but not exclusive to Year 6

Obligations

The school must appoint an Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) who is responsible for approving visits which fall into Category A and for submitting risk assessment and information on visits in categories B & C for the approval of the LA. The EVC is the Deputy Head.

Voluntary contributions

We are obliged to request voluntary contributions for school visits. The Governing Body has a Charging Policy that details the full range of activities where a charge can be made. Copies of this are available from the school office.

In order to ensure that we don't overburden the parental purse the schools guidelines are:-

- A maximum of one residential visit per year should normally be arranged.
- There should be no more than three visits a year per class, for which a charge is made.
- Any number of cost free local visits may be planned and arranged. Sudden unexpected opportunities or stimuli (such as a JCB digging locally) or some element of the weather should be utilised.

Parental permission

Parental permission must be obtained for all visits, including sports fixtures. **Appendix G** is a template for the trip information letter to parents. At the same time, medical information must be obtained, together with contact details for each child. Information regarding medicine and contacts must be taken with the group leader on the trip. A copy of that information (permission slips with contact details and medical information) must be left in the school office so that contact can be made with parents in the event of a critical incident.

Appendix F is a copy of the form to be sent to parents for contact and medical information.

Every effort will be made to send letters out to parents at least four weeks in advance and must be approved by the HT or EVC prior to being sent. However, sometimes the school is presented with last minute opportunities, which means that shorter notice may be given to parents. This will be avoided whenever possible. **Appendix B** is the "Checklist in preparation for Educational Visits" which clearly sets out the timetable.

Organisation

There are three categories of educational visits and procedures regarding the organisation of each visit depend upon the category in which they fall. Visits can only be led by people whom the leaders deem to be competent.

No child or group of children may be taken off site without prior consultation with the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) or the Headteacher (HT).

Category A – Low risk activities

These visits need to be approved by the EVC and include:

- walks in parks;
- visits to Christ Church
- local field studies presenting no technical hazards;
- visits to local youth clubs;
- regular sports functions;
- visits where no national governing body award is necessary.

A standard permission slip to enable children to be taken on local walks is signed by parents at the beginning of each year. **It is imperative that parents are informed when these ‘walks’ are going to take place and staff ensure that the medical information and contact details that they have for that date are up to date in the event of an emergency.**

Category B – Higher risks activities

These visits require approval from the LA through the ‘Best Be Safe’ web site and include:

- walking in remote countryside;
- camping;
- cycling on roads or off road terrain; and
- low level initiative challenges
- Off site day trips.

Category C – The most demanding

This category comprises any other types of visits and includes the kind of high level activities which would require an AALA licence, such as climbing, caving, water borne activities and all residential visits, whether within the UK or overseas.

All categories of visit require risk assessments to be carried out. Appendix D is the risk assessment forms

Authorisation for visits

Category ‘A’ visits need to be approved by the school’s EVC, including the suitability of the person leading the visit or activity, category B & C visits need the approval of the LA, including the approval of the leaders and providers. The LA requires one month’s notice of a visit in order for that visit to be processed and approval to be given. **Appendix A** is a copy of the Educational Visits Booking form to be completed for all off site activities.

Accompanying adults

At least one member of staff should accompany all children on an off site visit and a member of staff must be identified as a ‘group leader’. An ‘assistant group leader’ also needs to be identified. At least one member of staff accompanying the visit needs to hold a current First Aid certificate and be the named First Aider. Parental volunteers who accompany children on a class visit must have DBS clearance. An up to date list of all parents/volunteers who currently hold CRB clearance is held in the school office. **Appendix C** is template of the letter that should be sent out in advance to all parent volunteers that are accompanying the trip. It is school policy that if a parent comes as a helper they do not have their child in their group.

Adult/Pupil ratio:

The school requires the following adult/pupil ratios to be complied with:

- The ratio for external activities for children in Foundation Stage and Years 1 to 3 is 1:6.
- The ratio for external activities for children in Years 4, 5 and 6 require a ratio of 1:15
- Residential visits require a ratio of 1:10. On residential visits the school also requires two additional members of staff to attend the visit for back up in the event of illness, accidents or emergency.

Transport

- No child to sit on the first seats on the passenger side of the coach.
- Before coach leaves the Lead Teacher needs to check all seat belts are fastened and do a tension test on each belt.

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- Teachers should be spread throughout the coach.
- Any child who is prone to travel sickness should sit as close to the front of the coach as possible.

Pre visit planning:

If the visit is to a new/unknown place, it is essential that a pre visit planning trip is undertaken in order to carry out a risk assessment. A risk assessment from the venue must also be obtained and copied to the EVC as part of the authorisation process.

Sports fixtures:

Where children are required to take part in a sports fixture, either at Christ Church or at another school or venue, parental permission must be sought, together with medical information and contact details using the standard forms.

Should it be necessary for transport (other than a 'walking bus'), volunteer drivers must be sought together with parental permission for a child to be transported by another parent. A 'Transport Verification Form' (**Appendix E**) must be completed in advance of the trip and a copy should be held at the school office. Should a parent already have completed a Transport Verification Form, this will be kept on file for use whilst all certificates are valid. Parents must inform the office of any changes.

Teachers who drive children to fixtures must ensure that their insurance policy covers them to do so (as this would be deemed as "business"), obtain written permission from the parent and ensure that any child carried can be restrained in their own 3 point seat belt, (e.g. in a four-seater car, only 3 children can be transported).

Copies of standard permission/medical forms must be taken to the sports fixture, with copies left in the office. (Appendix H)

APPENDIX	TITLE
A	Educational Visits Booking form
B	Checklist in preparation for Educational Visits
C	Template letter to parent/carer volunteers
D	Risk Assessment Forms
E	Transport Verification Form'
F	Letter to parents re medical/permission form
G	Template 'trip letter'
H	Standard permission/medical form