

# Vernon Primary School



## Educational Visits Policy

## **Rationale**

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 children enables them to achieve a fuller understanding of the world around them through direct experience. We believe as a school that this hands on experience is part of the 'Cultural Capital' that we can offer children. Educational visits are an essential element of good primary practice. As a school we promote the SMSC (Social, Moral, Spiritual & Cultural) and we believe school visits embed all of these qualities.

## **Purposes**

Educational Visits can provide stimulus and support to work covered as part of the school curriculum. It may be that a visit provides an effective stimulus at the start of a unit of work; alternatively, teachers may decide to use an educational visit at any time during a project to enhance and support the curriculum.

Wherever or whatever the venue, teachers should ensure that the educational benefits to the children are maximised and is not simply a day out of school.

## **Guidelines**

The organisation of an educational visit is crucial to its success. With rigorous organisation and control, a visit should provide a rich, learning experience for the pupils.

All staff are trained in how to use the Cheshire East Evolve system. This system ensures that all visits are planned effectively considering all aspects of a visit. Before taking children on an educational visit, an RBA (Risk Based Assessment) must be completed and attached with the Evolve file. The Educational Visits Co-ordinator must then give their approval before passing it on to the Headteacher who is able to give their consent. Should a visit require County approval, it must be submitted four weeks in advance of the visit. Visits that require this extra consent are those that will incur dangerous activities, including being near water and overnight stays. When planning a residential visit, the Headteacher should be consulted before booking to ensure that the price and location are acceptable.

## **Head Teacher**

The Head Teacher at Vernon Primary will ensure that:

- A suitable group leader has been allocated
- The EVC is fully trained.
- All necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins.
- The risk assessment is complete and that it is safe to make the visit
- The group leader has experience in supervising and controlling the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively.
- All adults on the visit have appropriate Cheshire East DBS checks.
- The mode of travel is appropriate.
- Travel times out and back are known;
- There is adequate and relevant insurance cover.
- They have the address, phone number of the visit's venue, and have a contact name.
- They have the names of all the adults and pupils in the travelling group.
- If it is an overnight stay, they have contact with the members of staff to maintain contact and ensure there are no problems.
- They provide their own emergency contact details for overnight stays.
- They have given their approval for the visit using the Evolve system.

## **Group Leader**

One teacher, the group leader, is responsible overall for the supervision and conduct of the visit. This may be a shared responsibility if two classes are going on a visit. The Group Leader should:

- Carry out a pre-visit so that the risk assessment is accurate and up-to-date. This is necessary even when a teacher has been on the visit in previous years as changes may have occurred at a venue since the previous visit.
- Undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members and parents.

- Ensure the ratios suggested by Cheshire East are adhered to.
- Ensure that a Form C or Form D has been completed for each child prior to the visit.
- Know all the pupils proposed for the visit to assess the suitability of the visit
- Ensure that pupils understand their responsibilities whilst on the visit
- Ensure that there is a named if not qualified first aider on the visit.
- Ensure that all medication required by children on the visit is taken in case of an emergency.
- Submit the visit on Evolve for approval by the Headteacher, EVC and County if necessary.

### **Other adults involved in a visit**

Other adults on the visit must:

- Have a current DBS check. In line with current legislation, all adults require a DBS check if they are attending a visit. This should be checked before each visit, as legislation is liable to regular changes.
- Receive a copy of the itinerary for the day and list of the children in their group
- Follow the instructions of the leader and help with control and discipline.
- Complete a 'Next of Kin' form before leaving for the visit.

### **Responsibilities of pupils**

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

- Follow the instructions of the leader and other adults.
- Dress and behave sensibly and responsibly.

Any pupils whose behaviour may be considered 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. For each residential visit, a Parents' meeting will be held to give detailed information of what the children will need and what they will be doing. Teachers will take full responsibility for pupils at all times.

Parents must:

- Provide the group leader with emergency contact number(s).
- Sign the consent form.
- Give the group leader relevant information about their child's health, which might be relevant to the visit.

### **Risk Based Assessment**

A risk based assessment should always be carried out before setting off on a visit, using Cheshire East's Risk Assessment Form. 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? (See section on Ratios.)

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.
- Pupils with special educational or medical needs.
- The quality and suitability of available equipment.
- Seasonal conditions, weather and timing.

## **First Aid**

First Aid provision should be considered when assessing the risks of the visit. For adventurous activities, visits which involve overnight stays, or visits abroad it is necessary to have at least one trained first-aider in the group. For visits where the venue has its own First Aider, a member of school staff should be allocated as the First Aider so the children know who to go to first if they have a problem but they do not require a qualification.

Each teacher should take with them a small first aid kit in case of emergency, although most venues will have a more comprehensive one, which can be accessed. The contents of a first-aid kit will depend on what activities are planned. 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.

## **Ratios**

As general guidelines, the following ratio of adults to children should be used:

Reception: At least 1:6 although it will depend on the location and nature of the visit.

Years One to Three: 1:6

Years Four to Six: 1:15

Regardless of these suggested ratios, each visit will be assessed individually through the school's risk assessment procedure for educational visits.

Where a high adult: pupil ratio is required, it is not always feasible to use school staff alone. Parents with appropriate clearance may be used to supplement the supervision ratio. They should be carefully selected and ideally, they should be well known to the school and the pupil group.

If the school is leading an adventure activity, such as canoeing, the LEA or Governing Body 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.

## **Pupils with special educational and medical needs**

All children will have the same access to each educational visit, where possible. Every effort should be made to accommodate the physical and medical needs of all children 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.

## **Local Visits**

When using the local area for a visit such as the library or a local History walk, Cheshire East Form D must be completed for each child. This form can be completed once in the year and kept until July when it should be destroyed. A letter informing parents of a local visit, within Poynton, should be sent with a consent form to make them aware that their child will be out of the school grounds.

## **Sporting Activities**

One generic risk assessment should be completed at the start of the year for each sporting activity to take place off site e.g. football matches, swimming. Parental consent should always be sought for such activities.

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