

POLICY STATEMENT: EDUCATIONAL VISITS

RATIONALE

Educational Visits make a significant contribution to students’:

- Emotional, intellectual, spiritual and physical development, including that of personal initiative, resourcefulness and self-reliance.
- Social development, including a sense of community life, camaraderie and unselfishness.
- Wider appreciation of a range of both different activities, and physical, cultural and social environments.

PURPOSES

- To enhance children’s learning through the provision of both real or first hand experience, and access to specialist expertise external to the school, not normally available within the classroom.
- To increase knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the local area and other areas that are different in nature and environment to our own.
- To further develop skills in observation, recording and reporting. (Investigative skills).
- To assist in the development of self-esteem, confidence, independence, sense of adventure and sense of responsibility, particularly towards their own safety and the safety of others.
- To assist in the social development of students where they are given the opportunity to live and work with others in a situation different from the home environment, e.g. interdependence.

GUIDELINES

- See Staff Handbook, P.66, for an outline summary of planning procedures.
- **All educational visits require the Headteacher’s approval.** Some particularly require the agreement of the School’s Governors. Any proposal should be put to the Headteacher at least 15 school days prior to the proposed visit. (Exceptions **may** be accommodated). The more significant the visit (length/activities), the longer the notice required.
- Prior to planning all staff should read the internally produced guidelines – (“Organisation of Educational Visits”). The document presumes that section (R1 of the Health and Safety Manual will have been read also. (See Faculty Health and Safety Files)).
- Regarding costing of the visit it will be necessary to resolve 2 particular issues:
 - i. Timing of the visit as this relates to the school’s ‘Charging Policy’.
 - ii. Issues regarding insurance.

The Senior Deputy Head should be consulted regarding both issues **prior to any communication with parents.**

Do not enter into any financial commitments until all costs have been both accurately calculated and covered by sufficient, secured participation.

- Where the number of places is limited consideration must be given to a fair process of selection – **not** 'first come, first served'.
- Outdoor pursuits present their own particular problems e.g. trainers/teachers suitably qualified. A careful reading of the Education Authority's "Safety in Outdoor Pursuits" is required (copy available from Senior Deputy Head).
- An early Risk Assessment of the proposed visit/activity will be essential.

ORGANISATION OF EDUCATIONAL VISITS

INTRODUCTION

Before planning any educational visit, in or out of school hours, staff must consult section (R1 of the Health and Safety Manual (see Faculty/Department Health and Safety File): "School Visits and Out of School Activities").

The Senior Deputy Head is available to discuss issues arising from this document and **consultation is essential where proposed activities may involve hazardous activities.** It is assumed that staff will ensure that all visits comply with the Authority's recommendations. Any visit will be planned through Heads of Faculties/Departments, Heads of Year who will submit proposals to the Headteacher for preliminary approval. Following this the detailed internal administrative procedures must be implemented before the Headteacher's final approval is obtained.

NB: Parents and Governors (through the Headteacher) must be given detailed information about proposed visits. Visits must be planned well in advance to comply with the extended consultation procedures. Copies of all relevant documentation must be made available to the Senior Deputy Head.

PRINCIPLES

- Visits **during school time** must be of real educational value. Approval will not be given for any foreign visit or home tour which is basically social and/or recreational taking place **in school time.**
- A disproportionate amount of time should not be spent in travelling.
- The selection of pupils taking part **in school time** should be governed only by consideration of educational need. (Disciplinary action may preclude some pupils). Every attempt must be made to ensure accessibility for students with special education, medical, disability needs.
- Supervision: **Minimum Ratios are**
 - Within UK, day visits 1 teacher to 20 students.
 - Outside UK, non-residential visit, 1 teacher to 15 students.

- Residential (UK and abroad), 1 teacher to 10 students.
- Mixed gender parties, at least 1 teacher of each gender. (Generally).

The Headteacher is empowered to approve a suitable person who is not a member of the teaching staff to accompany a party and act as Supervisor.

No assistance for supervisory staff can be provided by the Authority. Concessions by Travel Agents and Transport Operators are the only way assistance can be given to staff for excursions out of school time.

- The Education Authority has stated that it will indemnify any firm in connection with any liability arising from the presence of pupils on its premises as a result of participation in a work experience scheme.

INTERNAL ORGANISATION

- To provide information necessary to fulfill Education Authority's requirements an application form, relating to visits both in and out of school time, has been devised. This is available from the School Office and must be completed, at the latest, **15** days before the visit starts. A copy will be posted on the Staff Room Notice Board with a list of participating staff and pupils for the information of staff. **However, it is assumed that prior to its publication, proposals will have been discussed with staff who may be affected, to avoid causing too much inconvenience.**
- In the light of proposed insurance arrangements, and the requirements of government directive regarding charging for in-school activities, **it is necessary that the content of letters to parents should be discussed with Senior Deputy Head (cf. School's Charging Policy).**
- The letter to parents must give sufficient details, including purpose, cost (inclusive of insurance), dates and times. Include a return slip at the foot of the letter for parents to give their permission. It is suggested that a suitable non-returnable deposit is requested. (Of course this deposit will be returned should the planned visit **not** go ahead).
- Parents must be informed in a letter of the insurance arrangements which will prevail:
 - either A** "The school's normal insurance arrangement will apply". A statement of this cover to be provided.
 - Or B** "Additional School Journey Insurance has been obtained". A statement of this cover to be provided.
 - Or C** Details of insurance cover provided where the visit has been organised through a third party (e.g. Travel Company).

Regarding A and B, statements of cover are available from the School Office.

If 'Additional School Journey Insurance' is required, once bookings have been received and the numbers of pupils known, **a proposal form** must be submitted to the Education Authority's Insurance Officer - through the relevant Finance Assistant so that cover can be established promptly.

- All pupils must submit an “**Essential Information**” form. (Appendix I - see Education Authority Document) before the visit. These forms must accompany the organiser on the visit. (Available from School Office **but** if returned to pupils at the end of the visit they can retain them for updating and future use). **A pupil should not travel if this document has not been provided.**
- Further informative letters and details of meetings to parents will be necessary to communicate all the information required. (See Education Authority Document). **The Headteacher should receive copies of all letters and details of all meetings pertaining to any visit; plus final details of members of parties.**
- Reports on visits should be provided for the Head teacher and for the Media.

FINANCIAL

- **ON NO ACCOUNT SHOULD ORGANISERS USE PRIVATE BANK ACCOUNTS FOR VISIT FUNDS.**
- See relevant Finance Assistant to receive advice on organising the collection of money and financial transactions. You will receive a document entitled “Pupil Cash Collection Facility”.
- You will need to use a “School Fund Transaction Request Form” for instructing the Cashier/Finance Assistant re financial transactions; this will provide a record also for internal audit of accounts. Any instructions re. Transactions should be in writing and a copy retained.
- Adequate notice is required for any withdrawals.

INSURANCE

- School Journey Insurance covers:
 - Cancellation and other expenses; (excluding first £15 other than loss of deposit);
 - Medical and Associated Expenses (excluding first £15);
 - Personal accident;
 - Personal Effects and Money (excluding first £15);
 - Legal Liability

Full details obtainable from the School Office.
- Staff (and any authorised adult supervisors) are covered only in respect of Personal Accident and Liability to Third Parties **as per normal cover applying whilst undertaking their duties.**

Staff are **not** covered by the County in respect of the other categories mentioned above **but** by payment of the same premium as pupils staff can be covered for all categories.
- Where insurance is offered through a “package” by Travel Firms, organisers must ensure that the cover is at least equal to that provided through the Education Authority and **that parents are notified on the details of this specific cover.**
- To obtain maximum benefit it is essential that premiums are paid to, and the proposal form submitted through, the relevant Finance Assistant promptly, at the beginning of planning the visit.

MEDICAL

- “Essential Information” forms must be available on the visit.
- Carry a supply of “Accident/Incident/Violence Report” forms - available from the School office.
- Carry a First Aid kit (obtainable from School Nurse / First Aiders)
- First £15 of medical expenses, per claimant, is excluded from insurance cover. Contingency plan required to cover costs e.g. prescription charges abroad. (Foreign travel - insist on E111 form for EEC).

E W Lyne
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