



Balfour Junior Academy

Educational Visits Policy

Overview

The school acknowledges the great value of Educational Visits on broadening and enhancing both the learning and social experience of pupils.

Under government policy and guidance, all schools are required to have a named Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) who will ensure that the planning and supervision of all trips and adventurous activities meet the DFE Requirements and LA guidelines.

This School's EVCs are Phillipa Dennis, Matt Lindsey and K. Hagan-Guest.

The role of the EVC is detailed in Section 3 of the publication 'Requirements for Educational Visits 2007' (the booklet).

All Visit Leaders are required to read the booklet in conjunction with this policy. All forms referred to in this policy are available from the EVC, or may be photocopied from the booklet or download from EVOLVE.

Approval for Visits

All matters regarding each visit outside school – feasibility, planning, safety, organisation etc – will require the prior approval of the EVC.

Approval of 'normal' day visits is at the discretion of the EVC. However, visits that are either:

- Overseas
- Residential or
- Involving an adventurous activity (as defined in Section 22 of the booklet)

will require the additional approval of the Trust (Visit Form and RAs are checked by Wirehouse Ltd advisers – the trust HS advisers). The governing body will also need to be informed about these visits prior to a commitment being made

If an external provider or tour operator is being used, they must complete the detailed Provider Form at the time of the provisional booking. The procedures to be followed in this case are outlined in section 29 of the booklet.

Competence to Lead

Any member of staff leading a visit will need to have their 'competence to lead' assessed before approval for the visit is given. For the majority of visits this will be assessed by the EVC. In assessing competence to lead, the EVC will take account of the factors stated in Section 8,10,11 of the booklet. In the case of the leading (ie instructing) of adventurous activities the assessment is Undertaken by the LA by means of an online Activity Leader Form, using the procedures and criteria in Section 28 of the booklet.

Reasons for Visits

It is essential that all visits have sound and clearly stated educational aims. Trips 'for the sake of it' will not receive approval.

Assessment of Risk

'Risk assessment' is a careful examination of what could cause harm to pupils, staff or others, together with an identification of the control measures necessary in order to reduce risks to a level which, in the professional judgement of the assessor, is deemed to be acceptable (i.e. low).

In considering risk, there are 3 levels of which visit leaders should be mindful:

- Generic Risks – normal risks attached to any activity out of school. These will be covered by careful completion of the 'Educational Visits Checklist'
- Event Specific Risk – any significant hazard or risk relating to the specific activity and outside the scope of item 1 above. These should be recorded on ESRA Form.
- Ongoing Risk – the monitoring of risks throughout the actual visit as circumstances change.

Further details on risk assessment will be found in Section 4,5,6,7,8,12 of the booklet.

Plan B

Despite the most detailed and sedulous pre-visit planning, things can go wrong on the day, e.g. parent helper is unavailable, member of staff is ill, transport fails to arrive, museum have lost booking, etc. To avoid having to make important decisions under pressure, it is important that some advanced thinking is done to cater for any foreseeable eventuality. This takes the form of **Plan B**.

Staffing Ratios

A professional judgement must be made by the Visit Leader, Headteacher and Deputy as to the appropriate ratio for each visit.

This will be determined by

- type, duration and level of activity
- needs of individuals within the group (SEN)
- experience and competence of staff and accompanying adults
- nature of the venue
- weather conditions at the time of year
- nature of transport involved

Supervision

Pupils must be supervised throughout all visits. However, there are circumstances when they might be unaccompanied by an adult (remote supervision). The decision to allow remote supervision should be based on risk assessment and must take into account factors such as:

- prior experience of pupils
- age of pupils
- responsibility of pupils
- competence/experience of staff
- environment/venue

Role of Supervising Parents

Supervising parents must be fully briefed on the programme, venue, activities, supervision arrangements and their responsibilities. They must also be given a written list of the pupils in their immediate care, and be shown the completed Form EV5.

First Aid

The level of first aid provision should be based on risk assessment. On all visits there should be a member of staff who has a good working knowledge of first aid. The Appointed Person First Aid Certificate is the minimum requirement for residential visits.

First aid kits are available from the office: if the visit involves the party splitting up by any distance, a kit should be taken for each group.

Transport

Travel arrangements should be included in the risk assessment. If public transport is to be used, all pupils and supervisors must be fully briefed as to procedures on platforms, at bus stops, on busy streets etc.

If travel is by coach or minibus, all pupils must wear a seat belt. Staff must ensure that pupils comply with this rule: pupils may also be asked to check the seat belt of their neighbour.

If any pupils are to travel by car, the driver must complete Form EV6. This is also relevant to sports fixtures, and applies to both staff and parents' cars. A new form must be completed every academic year.

Water 'Margin' Activities

Where pupils might participate in learning activities near or in water, such as a walk along a riverbank or seashore, collecting samples in ponds or streams, or paddling or walking in gentle shallow water, then guidance contained in the DFE 'Group Safety at Water Margins' is relevant. All staff, including parents, should be provided with a copy of this guidance prior to the visit.

Educational Visits Checklist

This checklist is an essential part of the risk management process and is applicable for all visits.

Seeking Parental Consent

Parents should be made fully aware of any likely risks to the visits and their management, so they may consent or refuse on a fully informed basis.

The letter to parents should therefore give full detail of the visit, the reason for the visit (educational aims), supervision arrangements and transport arrangements. Ensure that detail of other incidental activities. The letter should also state the cost of the visit per child if appropriate.

The reply should read:-

I give permission for to take part in I have read and understand the information about the visit. I enclose my voluntary contribution.

In case of sports fixtures

My child is / is not able to take part in the at on I have read and understand the

information in the letter and give permission for to take part.

Before the Visit

1. Fill in preliminary form at least one month in advance. Copy to EVC
2. In Case of residential, overseas, or adventurous activities, complete relevant forms.

If Approved.

- Complete ESRA Form
- Book Visit
- Book Transport
- Send Letter Home
- Complete Educational Visit Checklist and copy to EVC

On the Day of the Visit

Be sure to:-

- Collect first aid kit(s)
- Collect bucket if appropriate
- Send pupils for asthma inhalers
- Brief supervising parents
- Give supervising parents their lists of pupils
- Ensure that a minimum of one mobile phone is working, and that the office has the number(s)
- Count pupils

During the course of the visit, pupils should be counted regularly as appropriate, and always when changing locations. Always 'double-count'.

The mobile phone(s) should be switched on during the entire homeward journey.

After the Visit

It is important that after each visit a proper debrief takes place. This should take place within a week of the visit date, and should involve the Visit Leader, accompanying staff and, if appropriate, the supervising parents. The purpose of the debrief is to identify what went well and what could have been done better, in order to inform future planning.

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Mrs P Dennis