

GRINDON INFANT SCHOOL



Educational Visits Policy

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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. Educational visits are an essential element of good infant practice.

Purposes

Educational Visits can provide stimulus and support to work being 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.

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.

The following guidelines support the planning and implementation of educational visits organised at Grindon Infant School.

Head Teacher

The Head Teacher (EVC co-ordinator) at Grindon Infant School will endeavour to ensure that:

- a suitable group leader is appointed;
- 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 risk assessment is to be handed to the HT one week before the visit occurs;
- health and safety requirements have been met (link with health and safety policy)
- training needs have been met;
- the group leader has experience in supervising and controlling the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively;
- the group leader has relevant skills, qualifications and experience if acting as an instructor, and knows the location of the activity;
- all supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise children and have appropriate clearance;
- the Governing Board has approved the visit if necessary;
- parents have signed consent forms;
- arrangements have been made for all the medical needs and special educational needs of all the children;
- the mode of travel is appropriate;
- travel times out and back are known;
- there is adequate and relevant insurance cover;
- they have the address and phone number of the visit's venue and have a contact name;
- that they have the names of all the adults and pupils in the travelling group and the contact details of parents.

Group Leader

One Teacher, the group leader, is responsible overall for the supervision and conduct of the visit, and this should have been agreed with the Head Teacher. The Group Leader should:

- appoint a deputy;
- be able to control and lead pupils of the relevant age range;
- be suitable qualified if instructing an activity and be conversant in the good practice for that activity if not;
- 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;
- have regard to the health and safety of the group at all times;
- know all the pupils proposed for the visit to assess their suitability;
- observe the guidance set out for Teachers and other adults below;
- ensure that pupils understand their responsibilities (see responsibilities of pupils below).

Other Teachers and Adults involved in a visit

Teachers on school-led visits act as employees of the LA or of the Governing Board. They will therefore be acting in the course of their normal employment during their normal hours.

Teacher and other adults on the visit must:

- do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group;
- care for each individual pupil as any reasonable parent would;
- follow the instructions of the leader and help with control and discipline. Non-Teachers should generally not have sole charge of pupils except where risks to health and safety are minimal;
- consider stopping the visit or the activity if they think the risk to the health or safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable.

Responsibilities of Pupils

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

- not take unnecessary risks;
- follow the instructions of the leader and other adults;
- dress and behave sensibly and responsibly;
- look out for anything that might hurt or threaten anyone in the group and tell the group leader about it;
- should not undertake any task that they fear or that they think will be dangerous.

Any pupils whose behaviour may be considered to be 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.

If necessary, 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.

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

Parents must:

- provide the group leader with emergency contact number(s);
- sign the consent form and return it to school;
- give the group leader relevant information about their child's health which might be relevant to the visit.

Planning Educational Visits

Whether the visit is to a local park, museum or swimming pool, it is essential that careful planning takes place. This involves considering the dangers and difficulties which may arise and making plans to avoid them.

The detailed planning of a visit is undertaken by the organiser of the visit or the group leader.

The organiser / group leader must agree all plans with the Head Teacher. A Risk Assessment for the visit must be completed and handed to the Head Teacher one week in advance of the visit. All personnel and adults accompanying the trip are to be named on the risk assessment.

Risk Assessment

A Risk Assessment should always be carried out before setting off on a visit, using the Evolve online Risk Assessment Evaluation Form; this is then submitted at least one week prior to the visit and the EVC/Head Teacher will review the risk assessment and approve the visit or ask for further details. Grindon Infant School do not take part in visits which require authorisation from the Educational Visits Advisory Service based at Derwent Hill (Category 3: higher risk, defined as visits outside the UK, visits which include adventure activities, residential or visits to remote or hazardous locations.) Teachers should 'See Evolve User Guide' for more information on how to use Evolve, available online.

The Risk Assessment will decide the adult: child ratio for each visit but not less than 1:6.

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?
- The group leader and other supervisors should continually reassess the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action if pupils are in danger.

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;
- the group members' age, competence, fitness and temperament;
- pupils with special educational or medical needs;
- the quality and suitability of available equipment;
- seasonal conditions, weather and timing.

Exploratory Visit

Wherever possible the group leader should undertake an exploratory visit to:

- ensure that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit;
- assess potential areas and levels of risk;
- ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and pupils in the group;
- ensure that the group leader is familiar with the area before taking a party of young people.

If it is not feasible to carry out an exploratory visit, a minimum measure should be to contact the venue, seeking assurances about the venue's appropriateness for the visiting group.

Evaluating the Visit

As with any lesson, it is very important that we evaluate external visits to ensure maximum impact. Value for money should also be reported on. Evaluations will be completed using EVOLVE within 2 weeks after the trip, allowing all users access to these when planning future

visits. Any illness or child requiring unplanned medication during trips should be recorded and updated on CPOMs as soon as possible and the Designated Safeguarding Lead informed.

First Aid

First Aid provision should be considered when assessing the risks of the visit. The group leader should have a working knowledge of first aid and all adults in the group should know how to contact emergency services.

The minimum first-aid provision is:

- a suitably stocked first-aid box;
- a person appointed to be in charge of first-aid arrangements.

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. The contents of a first-aid kit will depend on what activities are planned.

Supervision

It is important to have a sufficient ratio of adult supervisors to pupils for any off-site visit. The factors to take into consideration include:

- sex, age and ability of group;
- special needs pupils;
- nature of activities;
- experience of adults in off site supervision;
- duration and nature of the journey;
- competence of staff, both general and on specific activities.

There should always be enough supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency. When visits are to remote areas or involved hazardous activities, the risks may be greater and supervision levels should be set accordingly.

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

Nursery and Early Years, visits off-site may be as low as: 1:2

Key Stage One, visits off-site on foot: 1:6

Key Stage One, visits off site involving public transport: 1:6

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

Where there is more than one adult supervisor a group leader, who has authority over the whole party, should be appointed.

Where a high adult: pupil ratio is required, it is not always feasible to use school staff alone. Adults/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. Parents who regularly help with supervision on educational visits will be asked to undertake DBS clearance.

All adult supervisors, including school staff and parent helpers must understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. In particular, all supervisors should be aware of any pupils who may require closer supervision, such as those with special needs or those with behavioural difficulties. Teachers retain responsibility for the group at all times.

For the protection of both adults and pupils, all adult supervisors should ensure that they are not alone in a one to one situation with a pupil.

Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of pupils should take place.

Preparing Pupils

Providing information and guidance to pupils is an important part of preparing for a school visit. Pupils should have a clear understanding about what is expected of them and what the

visit will entail. Pupils must understand what standard of behaviour is expected of them and why rules must be followed. The lack of control and discipline can be a major contributory factor when accidents occur. Pupils should also be told about any potential dangers and how they should act to ensure their own and other's safety.

Participation

Pupils should be assessed to ensure that they are capable of undertaking the proposed activities.

Pupils whose behaviour is such that the group leader is concerned for their, or others' safety, should be withdrawn from the activity.

Information to Pupils

It is for the group leader to decide how to provide information, but they should be satisfied that the pupils understand key safety information.

Pupils should understand:

- the aims and objectives of the visit / activity;
- background information about the place to be visited;
- how to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow rules;
- why safety precautions are in place;
- why special safety precautions are in place for anyone with disabilities;
- what standard of behaviour is expected from pupils;
- who is responsible for the group;
- what to do if approached by a stranger;
- what to do if separated from the group;
- emergency procedures.

Transport and Pupils

Pupils using transport on a visit should be made aware of basic safety rules including:

- arrive on time and wait for the transport away from the road, track, etc;
- do not rush towards the transport when it arrives;
- wear your seatbelt and stay seated while travelling on transport;
- make sure your bags do not block aisles on the transport;
- never attempt to get on or off the moving transport;
- never throw things out of the transport vehicle's windows;
- never get off a vehicle held up by traffic lights or in traffic;
- never run about while transport is moving or pass someone on steps or stairs;
- never kneel or stand on seats or otherwise impede the driver's vision;
- never distract or disturb the driver;
- stay clear of automatic doors / manual doors after boarding or leaving the transport;
- after leaving the vehicle, always wait for it to move off before crossing the road;
- if you have to cross roads to get to the transport always use the Green Cross Code;
- if you feel unwell while travelling, tell a teacher or the person who is otherwise responsible for the group.

Pupils with Special Educational and Medical Needs

Pupils with Special Educational or medical needs will not be excluded from school visits. Every effort should be made to accommodate them 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.

Communicating with Parents/Carers

Parents need to be aware that the teachers on the visit will be acting in their place – 'in loco parentis' and will be exercising the same care that a prudent parent would.

The following information on matters that might affect pupils' health and safety is useful to parents, and will be included in letter to Parents / Guardians prior to a visit:

- dates of the visit;
- times of departure and return;
- mode(s) of travel;
- names of leader, or other staff and of other accompanying adults;
- visit's objectives;
- details of the activities planned and of how the assessed risks will be managed;
- clothing and equipment to be taken;
- money to be taken;
- the information to be given by parents and what they will be asked to consent to.

Parental Consent

Grindon Infant School will seek consent for all visits involving young children.

If Parents withhold consent absolutely the pupil should not be taken on the visit, but the curricular aims of the visit should be delivered to the pupil in some other way, wherever possible. If the Parents give a conditional consent consideration will need to be given as to whether the child may be taken on the visit or not. The School's parental consent form should be completed for each pupil in the group.

Coastal Visits

Group leaders and other Teachers should be aware that many of the incidents affecting school children have occurred by or in the sea. There are dangers on the coast quite apart from those incurred in swimming.

At Grindon Infant School, the group leader should bear the following points in mind in the risk assessment of a coastal activity:

- tides and sandbanks are potential hazards so timings and exit routes should be checked;
- ensure group members are aware of warning signs and flags;
- establish a base on the beach to which members of the group may return if separated;
- look out for hazards such as glass, barbed wire and sewage outflows etc;
- some of a group's time on a beach may be recreational. Group leaders should consider which areas of the terrain and sea are out of bounds;
- cliff tops can be highly dangerous for school groups even during daylight. The group should keep to the path at all times. Group leaders should consider whether it is safe for pupils to ride mountain bikes on coastal paths.

Swimming

Swimming and paddling in the sea or other natural waters are potentially dangerous activities for a school group.

Swimming in the sea on a coastal visit, will **not** be allowed for Grindon Infant School children. Paddling will only be allowed as part of a supervised activity, preferably in recognised bathing areas which have official surveillance. Pupils should always be in sight of their Teachers. One Teacher should always stay out of the water for better surveillance.

Where paddling is to be allowed on a visit, a ratio of 1 adult: 4 children is a minimum.

Farm Visits

Grindon Infant School recognises that farms can be dangerous even for the people who work on them. Taking children to a farm will be very carefully planned and the risks to be assessed should include those arising from the misuse of farm machinery and the hazards associated with E coli 0157 food poisoning and other infections. Risk Assessments provided by the farm or educational visit venue will be considered by the group leader before planning is finalised. If appropriate and fit for purpose, the Risk Assessment may be adopted by the party.

The proposed farm will be checked to ensure that it is well managed; that it has a good reputation for safety standards and animal welfare; and that it maintains good washing facilities and clean grounds and public areas. An exploratory visit should be carried out.

The basis rules for a farm visit will be:

We will never let pupils:

- place their faces against the animals or their hands in their mouths after feeding them;
- eat until they have washed their hands;
- sample any animal foodstuffs;
- drink from farm taps (other than in designated public facilities);
- ride on tractors or other machines;
- play in the farm area.



Educational Visits Policy

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SIGNATURES:

Head Teacher	
Chair of Governors	