



**EDUCATIONAL VISITS 2017  
WITTON CHURCH WALK C E PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**A PARTNERSHIP OF SCHOOL, HOME, PARISH & COMMUNITY.**

**'Where Every Door is Opened and Every Gift is Unlocked'**

At Witton we are a partnership of school, church, home and community. We create a stimulating and caring environment, grounded in Christian belief and practice, so that all members of our school community feel happy, safe and secure. Time is taken to value and nurture each child educationally, creatively and spiritually. Children and staff are encouraged to aim for 'Everyday Excellence' and believe in themselves in order to achieve their full potential.

Our school works within the recommendations of The Equality Act 2010.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Principles**

The school is committed to incorporating educational visits and visitors into its scheme of work, providing that they will enhance pupils' relevant understanding and experiences, and that their inclusion is practicable, considering the constraints of staffing, cost and time. Visits help to develop a pupils' investigative skills and longer visits in particular encourage greater independence. All staff in the School have the option to take part in visits. If for any reason they do not wish to participate they should be prepared to cover for others.

Educational visits should be available to all of the pupils concerned, and should be organised accordingly, with particular consideration being given, especially when selected venues and organising transport, to any pupils who have special educational needs. Just as all other elements in course programmes, educational visits should have clear, relevant and achievable aims and objectives.

A major consideration in the organisation of any visit must be the safety of the participants, and staff, the LA. Guidelines and the School policy must be complied with. The minimum adult-to-pupil ratio is dependent on the nature of the visit and the age of the pupils – staff must therefore check that they comply with all school and LA requirements and regulations. The organiser must be satisfied that the venue is a suitable one, with all that this entails, and where applicable, that any officials from the venue who will be involved in the visit, are qualified, dependable and experienced.

## **SECTION 1 BEFORE THE VISIT**

### **Exploratory/Preliminary Visits**

All visits will benefit from an exploratory/preliminary visit if the visit is not a regular event. For outdoor activities the exploratory visit is absolutely necessary for safety reasons but also for reasons of sound educational planning. Risk assessment must be carried out by the visit leader and passed on to EVC via Evolve at least 4 weeks before visit is due to take place. If LA approval is required for all other risk assessments, 1 week's notice is essential

Exploratory visits contribute to overall planning by ensuring that the venue;

- can be assessed with regard to its ability to meet the aims and objectives of the visit;
- can be effectively assessed for risk;
- can cater for the individual needs of the group;
- can direct the visit's itinerary to make the best use of the venue's educational potential.

Exploratory visits contribute to overall planning by ensuring that the Group Leader:

- is familiar with the geographical, logistical and social aspects of the venue;
- has obtained names and addresses of other schools who have used the venue;
- has met staff at the venue and has obtained advice from them.

If the venue for the visit is not familiar to an instructor or prospective group leader then an exploratory visit must be undertaken if;

- i. the visit is abroad or;
- ii. the visit involves a residential element;
- iii. the visit involves outdoor activities, e.g. caving, climbing, hill walking, trekking, watersports and close proximity to water.

Many visits are straight forward repeats of a previously successful visit but with a different group of pupils. However many factors at the venue can alter during the course of the year, e.g. museum displays may change, pollution may appear on a shoreline and the weather is likely to be totally different from a previous year. For these reasons it is still good to practise to conduct an exploratory visit in order that planning and risk assessment are effective.

If an exploratory visit really is not possible then the Group Leader should obtain written information from the venue, from other schools who have recently visited it, and from local organisations such as tourist boards in order to complete a risk assessment – good practise would suggest that the visit should not take place in this is the case.

### **Other Considerations**

Other factors to be considered during the initial planning include:

- the facilities/equipment/clothing to be provided by parents for visit;
- the facilities/equipment/clothing to be provided by the School for the visit;
- the facilities/equipment/clothing to be provided by the venue for the visit;
- identification the need for and provide relevant staff training;
- the designation of someone to record the details of the visit and to carry accident forms etc;
- transport arrangements;
- insurance arrangements;
- information to the provider, e.g. names, ages, genders, special dietary requirements, etc;

- arrangements for communication between the group and the school;
- supervision ratios;
- first aid and medical administration;
- contingency measures for enforced change of plan, late return, sending pupils home early or other emergency arrangements;
- measure to keep parents fully informed;
- the preparation of pupils – to include knowledge and learning skills, safety awareness, code of behaviour, etc;
- parent information evening;
- to follow County recommendation with regard to terror threats.

### **Financial planning**

The group leader should ensure that parents are notified as early as possible as to:

- the total cost of the visit;
- how much of the cost will come from school;
- how much each parent will need to pay or be asked to contribute towards the cost of the visit (please see our PP policy);
- how much spending/pocket money pupils will reasonably need (especially important for trips which involve a residential element);
- use of any surplus funds, i.e. will they be returned to parents or retained for future visits?

Early notification of the above is important as this allows parents to make financial preparations. Many parents find it helpful to gauge the value of the visit if they have information relating to the constituent costs of the visit, i.e. transport, accommodation, food etc. A separate account heading should be opened within the school fund so that suitable banking arrangements are in place. This is the responsibility of the Bursar.

### **Charges**

The cost of the visit should appear on ParentPay up to 6 months prior. Parents can be asked to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of the trip. In reality the value of the requested contribution equates to the total cost of the visit and therefore if insufficient voluntary contributions are forthcoming the visit may have to be cancelled – parents must be notified of this contingency. Pupils whose parents/guardians do not contribute cannot be discriminated against.

**The Headteacher can charge parents for board and lodgings on residential visits as well as the full cost when a visit is deemed to be an 'optional extra'. An optional extra:**

- falls wholly or mainly outside school hours, i.e. a skiing holiday during the school holidays is an optional extra.
- does not form part of the National Curriculum or the statutory requirements for religious education;
- is not part of a syllabus towards a Prescribed Public Examination – if an A LEVEL Biology syllabus mentions fieldwork as a requirement then this in itself does not necessitate a residential fieldtrip to another part of the country as local facilities may suffice. However, if the syllabus mentions that pupils need to know about the ecology of rocky shores and they live in a city a long way from the coast then the fieldtrip would not be classed as an 'optional extra';

Parents who are in receipt of Income Support, Income-Based Jobseekers' Allowance, Family Credit or Disability Allowance may have board and lodging costs remitted for residential visits which;

- take place during school hours or;
- are not optional extras.

The parent's agreement to meet the costs of an optional extra visit before the visit is planned in detail will always be obtained in writing. The stated cost of an extra visit must not include an element of subsidy for pupils whose families do not meet the full charge.

The School conforms to the LEA's charging policy and the DES Circular 2/89, THE Education Reform Act 1988: Charges for School Activities.

### **First Aid**

First aid considerations must form part of the risk assessment – these considerations should include:

- the numbers in the group and the nature of the activity;
- the nature of any likely injuries and how effective first aid would be;
- the distance to the nearest hospital and availability to transport. N.B. All adults in the group should know how to contact the emergency services.

In all cases a nominated person should be in charge of the first-aid arrangements, e.g. a fully-trained first-aider is required for adventurous activities, visits abroad or residential visits. However, for normal school trips and visits the group leader should have a good working knowledge of first aid and ensure that an adequate first-aid box is taken and ensure a first aider is present. In the case of over 6 pupils, the first aider must have paediatric first aid.

The lead must ensure that they carry a fully-stocked first aid box.

N.B. All minibuses must carry a first-aid kit.

### **Approval for visits**

#### **a) Approval – 'In Principle'**

The group leader should obtain financial approval from the Headteacher as to the general suitability of arranging the proposed visit. This approval is only 'in principle' and must be obtained before any substantial arrangements are made. The Headteacher must also be regularly informed in writing of the progress of the planning of the visit. Thereafter, and as soon as possible, the Group Leader should complete the formal approval form.

#### **b) Approval 'Formal'**

The formal approval form must be made using the County's 'EVOLVE' program.

- The Visit Leader will log onto the EVOLVE system and will then complete the overview section detailing number of children taking part, itinerary, staffing etc. and attach any further documentation necessary ie letters sent home to parents and the County Generic Risk Assessment form (a blank copy is held on the school network for completion). As well as completing the formal approval form the Group Leader must show how the plans for the visit comply with current regulations and guidelines, including the School's Policy on Visits and the School's general Health and Safety Policy and that of the LA (if applicable)
- Once this is submitted a copy is forwarded to the Educational Visit Leader who then checks all the information to ensure everything is complete before forwarding to the Headteacher to approve or on to County if the visit involves an overnight stay or Outdoor Activities/Water based activities which could be potentially hazardous.

- The Educational Visit Leader will then receive notification of approval or actions that need to be completed before the visit can be approved in which case the process would begin again until approval was received.

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It is the Group Leader's responsibility to inform the Headteacher of any changes to the information contained in the formal approval form; e.g. insurance, itinerary, staffing.

N.B. If the visit is non-routine, unusual or involves an overnight stay, potentially hazardous activities or travel outside the UK then the Governors and the LA must be informed.

The parents or guardians must be fully informed about the visit in a letter from the organising teacher (named), which should explain:

- its nature and purpose (to include aims and objectives);
- outline the programme/itinerary making reference to issues such as working near rivers or roads;
- how and when pupils will be supervised – making special reference to any work not directly supervised.

The organising teacher must also ensure that everyone involved is aware of any contingency plans for inclement weather or foreseen circumstances, aware of the first-aid facilities, and aware of any emergency telephone numbers. A full meeting should take place with all adults within 24 hours of the visit – this includes parent helpers.

If transport by coach or minibus is to be involved, the organiser must be satisfied that the vehicle(s) and the operator comply with the statutory requirements, and with any other requirements laid down by the LA or the School.

Once a visit has been planned, and any pre-site visits carried out, Risk assessment needs to be completed through the Evolve system. If it is a visit to a venue that has been used previously by the school, risk assessments should be handed to the EVC at least a week prior to the visit.

In the case of residential visits, risk assessment forms should be completed and submitted through the Evolve system at least 4 weeks prior to the visit. If this is to a venue not previously used by the school, pre-site visit, risk assessment forms. In this case, all risk assessments should be passed on to county for approval, at least 4 weeks prior to visit.

Members of the School Office staff should be notified, in writing, of the dates and times of all visits, and of the pupils and teachers involved. On any occasion when pupils who will be away from the School the catering staff should also be notified, preferably at least two weeks prior to the visit. In all cases, the teachers from whose lessons or extra-curricular activities pupils will be absent should be advised of that fact – use of the staff diary and notice board should be suitable for this purpose.

## **SECTION 2 DURING THE VISIT**

Staff should make frequent references to the rules and procedures applicable to the visit or particular activity.

- a) Staff should insist that pupils are inducted into a real sense of safety awareness and good practice and reiterate school's code of conduct.
- b) Staff must adhere to the County Coach policy. It can be found in the Evolve file on the server.
- c) Pupils should be encouraged to develop a strong sense of 'Health & Safety' for themselves and others, and to become familiar with the general and visit specific rules and procedures.

Pupils must heed the staff's advice on how to avoid any potential risks when using particular equipment/hardware. They are required to behave at all times, and should be reminded regularly of the dangers.

- d) Dealing with accidents and emergencies;  
Follow the First Aid Policy at the educational visit alongside school's policy.  
Where possible School should be contacted and advice sought – critical incident and lost child procedure put in place if necessary.

**ILLNESS & SICKNESS DURING THE VISIT:**

Pupils must be encouraged to report that they are feeling unwell during a visit. They should have confidence in knowing that such matters are regarded seriously from a Health and Safety point of view, e.g. the unwell pupil may have an increased chance of an accident.

- e) Jewellery (except closely fitting and non protruding ear studs) should not normally be worn in school or during school visits. N.B.If jewellery is worn for cultural reasons, religious observance or as a means of ethnic identity then every endeavour will be made to reach a safe compromise, e.g. adhesive tape may be wrapped around the finger or wrist in order that the risk of that item 'catching' or being damaged is minimised. When such instances occur the advice of the Senior Leadership Team must be sought and parents must be informed in writing of any remaining risk.

**SECTION 3 AFTER THE VISIT**

- a) The Group Leader should ensure that senior leaders are informed of the conduct of the pupils so that appropriate comments/praise can be made in assemblies and that a report (including evaluation) is presented to the Governing Body – perhaps for inclusion in the next Headteacher's report to the Governors.
- b) The Group Leader should also ensure that staff who have covered lessons because of the visit should be thanked in an appropriate way.

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