

HURST GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL



Educational Visits Policy

Policy for the attention of			
Audience	Key Audience	Optional Audience	Additional/Notes
Senior Leadership Team	√		
Teachers	√		
Teaching Assistants	√		
Administrative Staff	√		
Lunchtime Supervisors		√	
Site Manager		√	
Cleaners		√	
Governors	√		
Parents	√		
Website	√		
Local Authority		√	

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Policy and Guidance for Educational Visits and Learning Outside the Classroom

**Incorporating the “National Guidance”
from the Outdoor Education Advisers
Panel
2017**

Website Version

Contents

Introduction

Executive summary from Ofsted

Policy and Guidance for Educational Visits and Learning Outside the Classroom

Scope and Remit

Assessment of Leader Competence and Good Practice Requirements

Preliminary Visits and Provider Assurances

Adventure activities using licensed providers

Vetting and DBS Checks

Insurance for Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities

Duke of Edinburgh Award

Risk Management

Specific approval from the Dudley MBC Offsite Visits Team is required for the following activities:

In the event of critical incident/Emergency Procedures

First aid / Emergency Procedures

Safeguarding Children Procedures

Base contact & emergency numbers – Example

Introduction

Learning outdoors is an important part of every young person's development in the broadest sense. Children and young people may return stimulated, enthused and with much greater knowledge about themselves, their own physical skills and a deeper understanding of the environment they live in.

Underpinning this policy is a comprehensive web based resource system "Evolve" - (EVOLVE *visits* is an essential tool for planning and managing educational visits, on-site activities, after school clubs and sports fixtures). This innovative and market leading system will be continually edited and upgraded thus eliminating the need for printing and bulky documentation.

It is essential that qualified competent staff can lead and undertake these activities and experiences safely carefully weighing up the benefits against the risks.

Executive summary from Ofsted

Learning inside a classroom is a tried and tested method of organising schooling. However, teachers and learners have always valued the additional opportunities for learning provided by a range of activities conducted outside the classroom. These include day and residential visits, field studies, investigations conducted in the local area, sporting events, and music and drama productions. In organising such activities, schools and colleges have often drawn on the services of a range of providers, including commercially run outdoor education and sport centres, as well as the education departments of museums, art galleries, theatres and concert halls. Recently, the Government has placed increased emphasis on such activities with the publication of the Learning outside the classroom manifesto and the training and guidance associated with it.

Policy and Guidance for Educational Visits and Learning Outside the Classroom

1. Provision of Employer Guidance

Hurst Green Primary school under the advice of Dudley MBC has formally adopted "***Outdoor Education Advisers Panel National Guidance for the Management of Outdoor Learning, Off-site Visits and Learning Outside the Classroom***". This guidance can be found on the following web site:

<https://oeapng.info/guidance-documents/>

Anybody involved in educational visits and learning outside the classroom is strongly advised to read this policy before seeking information from the oeapng website.

It is a legal expectation that employees **must** work within the requirements of their employer's policy and guidance. Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council employees

must follow the requirements of 'Outdoor Education Advisers Panel National Guidance', as well as the requirements of this document.

Scope and Remit

The OEAP National Guidance document: 1c “**Status and Remit and Rationale**” clarifies the range of employees whose work requires them to use the guidance. In summary, it applies to employees whose work involves any one of the following:

- direct supervision of children and young people undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal classroom or environment;
- direct supervision of children and young people undertaking experiences that fall within the remit of learning outside the classroom;
- facilitating experiences for children and young people undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal classroom or environment;
- deploying staff who will supervise or facilitate experiences for children and young people undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal environment;
- this guidance may be applicable for all those supervising vulnerable adults as there is a transfer of good practice for the wider use of educational visits;

This applies regardless of whether or not the activities take place within or outside of normal working hours, including weekends and holiday periods.

For a more expansive explanation of legal expectations, all users of the guidance are strongly recommended to read the OEAP National Guidance document: 3.2a “**Underpinning Legal Framework and Duty of Care**”

Assessment of Leader Competence and Good Practice Requirements

OEAP National Guidance provides clear advice regarding the assessment of leader competence. It is an expectation of the Council Policy and Guidance that all leaders and their assistants have been classed as competent to undertake the responsibilities of leading the educational visit or learning outside the classroom activity by the senior leadership team / Educational Visits co-ordinator.

Refer to OEAP National Guidance document: 3.2d/4.4a “**Assessment of Competence**”

To be deemed competent, a Visit / Activity Leader, or Assistant Leader must be able to demonstrate *the ability to operate to the current standards of recognised good practice for that role*.

All staff and helpers must be competent to carry out their defined roles and responsibilities.

OEAP National Guidance sets a clear standard to which leaders **must** work. Staff participating in educational visits and learning outside the classroom activities must be aware of the extent of their duty of care and should only be given such responsibilities as are in keeping with the above guidance. It is particularly important

that careful consideration of competence issues is applied to both newly qualified and newly appointed staff.

For example- NQTs should not lead a trip if it is their first as a newly qualified teacher.

Where a Volunteer helper is a parent (or otherwise in a close relationship to a young person taking part in the visit), they should be made aware of the potential for their relationship to compromise the Visit Leader's plans for group management. The Visit Leader should directly address this issue as part of the Risk-Benefit assessment.

This being the case, the EVC and head teacher should therefore consider the following when assessing the competence of a member of staff to lead a visit:

- What is the leader's reason for undertaking the visit?
- Is the leader an employee?
- Has the leader a real sense of responsibility, extending beyond the teaching of the subject to concern for the participants well-being?
- Does the leader possess the necessary organising ability?
- Is the leader competent in risk assessment and risk management?
- What experience has the leader of the participants he/she intends to lead?
- What experience has the leader in leading, or assisting in the leading of similar visits or activities?
- What experience has the leader of the environment and geographical area chosen?
- Does the leader possess appropriate qualifications?
- If appropriate, what is the leader's personal level of skill in the activity, and fitness level?
- All supervisory staff must remain vigilant and carry out ongoing dynamic risk assessment throughout the duration of every trip.
- Plan B – if your first option isn't available, you must always have an appropriate second option available.

Refer to OEAP National Guidance document: 4.3a ***“Good Practice Basics”***

Preliminary Visits and Provider Assurances

All educational visits and learning outside the classroom activities should be thoroughly researched to establish the suitability of the venue and to check that facilities and third party provision will meet group needs and expectations. Such information gathering is essential in assessing the requirements for effective supervision of young people. It is a vital dimension of risk management.

For any new educational visit, a preliminary visit is essential. Wherever reasonably practicable, it is good practice to carry out a preliminary visit on sites that have already been visited.

Adventure activities using licensed providers

For further information, all users of the guidance are recommended to read the OEAP NG document:

“Adventurous Activities”.

Holding a licence means that a provider has been inspected and the licensing authority are satisfied that appropriate safety measures are in place for the provision of the specified licensed adventure activities. Other elements of the provision – such as catering and accommodation are not covered by the licensing scheme. These should be checked separately by the Visit Leader.

Adventure activities using non-licensed providers

- Risks have been assessed and that the provider's staff that are competent to instruct and lead young people of the group's age range on the activity. Competence could be demonstrated by holding the relevant NGB (National Governing Bodies) award where it exists or through successful participation in an NGB approved in-house scheme.
- The equipment is appropriate and that its safe condition is checked before each use.
- Operating procedures conform to the guidelines of the National Governing Body for the activity where this is appropriate.
- Clear management of safety systems is in place.
- There is appropriate provision for first aid.
- There are emergency procedures (including arrangements for informing next of kin and for alerting the Visit Leader), that the provider's staff are competent in the procedures and will hold emergency phone numbers and addresses of the group members, and that the group will have a fire drill as soon as possible on arrival at the provider's base.

The Visit Leader may wish to ask the provider for names of other schools/centres who have recently used its facilities.

Other issues to consider with all adventure activity providers

The Visit Leader should check and agree the provider's arrangements for supervision and recreation during the evenings and between adventure activities. The Visit Leader should also provide any relevant information for the provider such as the group's age range, competence etc.

The Visit Leader and staff retain ultimate responsibility for young people at all times during adventure activities, even when the group is under instruction by a member of the provider's staff. The provider is responsible for the safe running of an activity. Clear handover and handback procedures should be in place. Everyone, including the young people, must have an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the school/centre staff and the provider's staff.

The Visit Leader and other staff should have sufficient information on what the activity involves before it takes place. They should approach the instructor at an appropriate safe interval if they are concerned that the young people may be at unnecessary risk. Assurances may be sought that the provider has:

- Checked the suitability of the staff, including temporary workers, to work with young people.
- Clearly defined the roles and responsibilities of its staff.
- Made appropriate security arrangements.
- Obtained appropriate public liability insurance.

Vetting and DBS Checks

Refer to Dudley MBC policy and OEAP National Guidance document: 3.2g “**Vetting Disclosure and Barring Service**”

Volunteers in the Council / Schools

The advice states those who work *frequently* or *intensively* with, or have *regular access* to young people or vulnerable adults, must undergo an enhanced DBS check as part of their recruitment process.

For the purposes of this guidance:

- *frequently* is defined as "once a week or more";
- *intensively* is defined as 4 days or more in a month or overnight.

However, it must be clearly understood that a DBS check (or other vetting procedure) in itself, is no guarantee as to the suitability of an adult to work with any given group of young or vulnerable people. The placement of an adult within a situation of professional trust (where young people could be vulnerable to physical or mental exploitation or grooming) should always be on the understanding that an overview based on a common sense risk-benefit assessment process has been considered. Where a Volunteer Helper is a parent (or otherwise in a close relationship to a young person taking part in the visit) they should be made aware of the potential for their relationship to compromise the Visit Leader's plans for group management. The Visit Leader should directly address this issue as part of the Risk-Benefit assessment

Insurance for Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities.

The school office and leader will ensure that the correct amount of insurance is put in place for all of site visits.

Risk Management

The employer has a legal duty to ensure that risks are managed - requiring them to be reduced to an “acceptable” or “tolerable” level. This requires that suitable and sufficient risk management systems are in place, requiring the employer to provide such support, training and resources to its employees as is necessary to implement this policy.

The risk management of an activity should be informed by the benefits to be gained from participating. The Council strongly recommends a “Risk-Benefit Assessment” approach, whereby the starting point for any risk assessment should be a consideration of the targeted benefits and learning outcomes. HSE (health and safety executive) endorse this approach through their “**Principles of Sensible Risk Management**” and advocate that it is important that young people are exposed to well-managed risks so that they learn how to manage risk for themselves.

There is a requirement for the risk assessment process to be recorded and for suitable and sufficient control measures to be identified for any significant risks i.e. those that may cause serious harm to individuals. EVC Training ensures that establishments are supplied with electronic generic risk-benefit assessments for educational visits and learning outside the classroom.

Hurst Green have adopted and adapted these materials to ease the burden of bureaucracy that might otherwise discourage leaders from making full use of learning outside the classroom learning opportunities.

Refer to OEAP National Guidance document: 4.3c ***Risk Management***

Here at Hurst Green, all offsite visits which are not covered by the councils VJE form will require staff to complete a clear and concise risk assessment via Evolve.

However, there is no legal or **Dudley MBC** requirement to produce a risk assessment in a particular format; but there is a requirement for the process to be recorded and for suitable and sufficient control measures to be identified for any significant risks i.e. those that may cause serious harm to an individual, or harm several people.

Specific approval from the Dudley MBC Offsite Visits Team is required for the following activities:

- Residential visits
- Overseas visits (including expeditions)
- Adventurous activities (see definition below)
- Beach trips - activity/trips in close proximity to open water
- Other visits where the level of risk is similar to the visits listed above.

For any other trip, the assessment process is structured clearly: the form will be processed by the Visit leader, assessed by the Education visits coordinator (A. South) and approved by the head teacher (V. Kelly).

The following visits are regarded as adventurous and therefore do require **Dudley MBC Offsite Visits Team** approval. These activities must be supervised by a member of staff who has previous relevant experience and/or who has been assessed.

Please contact the Dudley MBC Offsite Visits Team if you are unsure if this definition applies.

- Swimming (all forms except publicly life guarded pools)
- Camping
- Canoeing / kayaking / rafting / improvised rafting
- All other forms of boating
- Rock climbing(outdoor) and related mountaineering activities River/gorge walking or scrambling
- Underground exploration
- Off-site mountain biking and lowland trail riding
- Road cycling (except as part of a 'Bikeability', cycling proficiency or similar programme)
- Horse riding
- Quad bikes, off-road buggies
- High level ropes courses
- 'Extreme' sports
- Water based activities
- Any other activities involving skills inherent in any of the above or that may contain a similar level of risk to participants or staff.
- Beach activity/trips in close proximity to open water
- Ice rink skating
- Orienteering
- All activities in 'open country' – any activity (hill walking, mountaineering, fieldwork, biking etc.) on moorland (open uncultivated land) at any height or mountainous ground over 600 metres above sea level **or** at any height where it would take 30 minutes to reach an accessible road or refuge.

Approval for the above will only be given online via EVOLVE.

Once a trip has been approved by the EVC and head, all staff who are taking part on the trip -including volunteers- must sign the school pro forma to confirm they have read the risk assessment and are happy with its contents.

Residential Trips

There must be a EVC present on any visit that involves children staying away from home for one night or more. The only current trained EVC is Mr A. South

The following visits are not regarded as adventurous and therefore do not require **Dudley MBC Offsite Visits Team** approval. These activities must however be supervised by a member of staff who has previous relevant experience and/or who has been assessed by the EVC or head teacher/ service manager as competent to supervise the activity:

- Walking in parks or non-remote country paths
- Field studies (unless in the environments defined as adventurous)
- Swimming in publicly life guarded pools
- Theme parks (e.g. Alton Towers, Adventure Valley etc.)
- Tourist attractions
- Pedal go-carts
- Motorised go-karts at commercial venues
- Paint balling and 'Laser Quest' type activities
- Archery clubs
- Indoor rock climbing/bouldering provided by a leisure centre or similar commercial venue
- Farm visits
- Local traffic surveys
- Museums, libraries etc.
- Physical education and sports fixtures
- Water margin activities – such as walking along a riverbank or stream, collecting samples from streams & ponds, or paddling in gentle shallow (up to the knees) water. If the activity exceeds this definition the activity is water based and therefore adventurous.

In the event of critical incident/Emergency Procedures

A critical incident is an incident where any member of a group undertaking an educational visit or learning outside the classroom activity has either:

- suffered a life threatening injury or fatality;
- is at serious risk;
- or has gone missing for a significant and unacceptable period.

Schools must have emergency planning procedures in place in the event of a critical incident. Every visit leader and assistant leader must be familiar with emergency planning procedures and reporting mechanism. This forms part of the training delivered to EVCs.

Relevant emergency contact telephone numbers should be carried by leaders at all times during an offsite educational visit but should only be used in the case of a genuine emergency. Under no circumstances should these telephone numbers be given to young people or to their parents or carers.

First aid / Emergency Procedures

All schools and services should consider the need for robust emergency arrangements as part of visit planning and risk assessment process.

Safeguarding Children Procedures

The Procedures apply to all children and young people aged 0 to 18 years.

They are addressed to all organisations, agencies and individuals who work with children and young people in Dudley, including those whose work with adults brings them into contact with children and young people.

All organisations, agencies and individuals who work with children and young people in Dudley, including those whose work with adults brings them into contact with children and young people should understand these thresholds.

Critical incidents

A critical incident is an incident where any member of a group undertaking an off-site activity has:

- either suffered a life threatening injury or fatality;
- is at serious risk;
- or has gone missing for a significant and unacceptable period.

Planning and preparation of the Council's response to a major incident, focussing on mitigating the impact of any emergency which may arise within the locality.

The team facilitates the planning and preparation of the Council's response to a major incident, focussing on mitigating the impact of any emergency which may arise within the locality.

It co-ordinates the response and activities of the Council by those directorates that may have a role to play in responding to the particular emergency. This may include the implementation of special arrangements by one or more of the emergency services, and/or the National Health Service. It includes major transport accidents, severe weather conditions, industrial accidents, fire, epidemics or terrorist activities.

The concept utilised is that termed Integrated Emergency Management and this involves working with the emergency services, utilities and voluntary agencies to ensure that together with the Council's own directorates, all concerned work together with the common goal of returning the community to normality as soon as reasonably possible.

The service also oversees the council's Business Continuity Planning. It is the responsibility of Directorates and Service Areas to identify critical services and construct plans to ensure the continuation of those services during times of disruption from both inside and outside influences.

For more information on Emergency Planning call 01384 811552

This numbers should be carried by leaders at all times during an off-site activity but should only be used in the case of a genuine emergency. Under no circumstances should these numbers be given to young people or to their parents or guardians.

Inclusion

Every effort should be made to ensure that educational visits and learning outside the classroom. Activities are accessible to all, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, disability, ethnic origin, genre, sexuality or religion. If a visit needs to cater for children with special educational needs, every reasonable effort should be made to find a venue that is both suitable and accessible and that enables the whole group to participate and be involved.

Exclusion on the grounds of behaviour

It may be reasonable to exclude a young person where their behaviour presents a significant, unmanageable and unacceptable risk to the health, safety and welfare of either themselves, or other members of the group, or the leaders. The Equality Act protects people from discrimination and harassment based on the 'protected characteristics'. Where a young person has a behaviour difficulty that is not associated with a protected characteristic then it is unlikely that the Equality Act applies. When a young person is excluded on these grounds, you should consider providing alternative ways of achieving the same learning outcomes. Where there is some doubt about including or excluding a young person on the grounds of their behaviour, the following points should be considered:

- Identifying the issue at the earliest stage of planning.
- Involving all interested parties.
- Establishing a behaviour management plan with agreed action points that may enable inclusion on the visit.
- Establishing behaviour targets and timescales to be met to allow inclusion, or trigger a decision to exclude.
- Providing an additional adult, such as a parent or support worker, with a specific brief to manage behaviour issues.
- Ensuring that what is expected of staff is reasonable and within their competence.
- Recording this process.

Event Specific Notes (ESN) Module on Evolve

Staff will use the following headings when assessing risks for their venue and group:

Purpose

Venues/External Providers

- Types of activities , e.g. water based , adventurous
- Sleeping arrangements
- Overnight security
- Fire drill / evacuation procedure

Travel Arrangements

- Drivers hours
- Drivers qualifications/documentation
- Seat belts
- Comfort breaks
- Safety pre embarkation brief , i.e. ferry, aeroplane

Staffing & Attendees

- Ratio
 - Gender
 - Group dynamics
 - Missing child/meeting point
- Additional information to include
 - Personal safety
 - Emergency Plan
 - Meds
 - Kit/clothing
 - Parents informed /aware of activities/trip
 - Appendix list of things to consider

Pre and post pandemic changes

During or immediately after a pandemic, this visits policy will be adapted per government guidance.

Data Protection

This policy adheres to the principles under data protection law. For further information please review the school's data protection policy published on the school's website.