

EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

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Introduction

Students can derive a good deal of educational benefit from taking part in educational visits. Educational visits play a major role in the education and development of young people. They contribute significantly to the development of cross curricular links and to personal and social education through encouraging responsibility, self-confidence and self-reliance. This policy is designed to ensure that teachers and students stay safe while on educational visits.

Educational Visits and Events process for approval

All trips, other than local day trips, must be approved by the Brockwood Park Principal and Inwoods Small School Coordinator.

Objectives:

To develop a process:

- Which understands both the costs and benefits of educational visits/trips and events.
- Which appreciates the contribution that events/trips make to the educational life of the school.
- By which visits/trips can be viewed in terms of their overall impact.
- Which will encourage forward planning but retain some degree of short term flexibility.
- Which will decide on whether a particular trip can take place or not.
- Which will provide support for staff wishing to undertake visits/trips.

Principles

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- Overseas residential trips must have one term's notice minimum.
- UK residential trips must have at least two weeks notice minimum.
- Longer term residential trips should take place in holiday time as far as possible.

- Trips arranged at short notice are subject to calendar availability and will be allowed only if special circumstances exist and/or the calendar allows.
- All trips/visits are subject to calendar availability. Clashes will be examined and will form part of the basis for decisions.

Trips/weekends will be viewed in terms of:

- Their educational value
- Cost-financial
- Environmental impact
- Impact on teaching and learning
- Impact on staff
- Impact on extra-curricular life
- Impact on school life in general

Planning visits and expeditions

All trip arrangements must be approved by the Principal (Brockwood) or School Coordinator (Inwoods)

When planning a trip all staff must fill out the Trips and Outings form held at the main school reception at Brockwood, for evaluation by the Estate and Facilities team. At this point the decision will be made by the competent Health and Safety Representative as to whether the trip will require further evaluation and a risk assessment. The staff member completing the Trips and Outings form will need to refer to a copy of this Educational Visits Policy, which is stapled to each Outings form, and complete the actions therein.

The following is aimed at tackling common questions from staff when planning visits and is designed to encourage 'good practice'. Some of these guidelines only apply to expeditions, longer and overseas visits, but you are advised to read through these guidelines before planning any visit.

Staffing

As with all visits, the staffing ratios and requirements must be visit-specific according to the number, composition, age-range and appropriate to the venue and activities planned for the visit.

As a general rule, the following applies:

- Groups on visits must have at least two members of staff. (In certain circumstances one staff member may be sufficient e.g. older students attending a lecture in London)
- If there is a mixed group of girls and boys, at least one female and one male member of staff must accompany the group on the visit. (In certain circumstances one member of staff, male or female may be sufficient e.g. as above)

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- Normally a staff ratio to students of 1 member of staff to 10 students should be followed.
- Ratios on residential trips should be 1 member of staff to 8 students.
- All groups on visits must have a nominated group leader and nominated deputy leader (except on visits led by one person)

For Inwoods Small School the ratios recommended by RoSPA are as follows:

1:15 for all visits where the element of risk is similar to the risks encountered in daily life.

1:10 for all trips abroad.

1:6 for children under eight and/or where the children have special needs.

1:5 or less for high risk activities.

In consideration of EYFS, The Early Years and Foundation Stage Statutory Framework sets out specific legal requirements for minimum ratios in this age group, which apply on outings. In summary, they require a minimum of two adults with a group, including at least one person who has a current paediatric first aid certificate, with minimum ratios as follows, age 3+, 1:8 or 1:13 depending on setting, time of day and staff qualifications.

Tour Companies and external providers

Only licensed providers (e.g. Adventurous Activities Licensing Authority AALA) may be used. It is also advisable to obtain recommendations from other schools that have used the provider if the company is otherwise unknown to you.

Insurance

The law places the Group Leader “in loco parentis”. The DCSF Guidance “The Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits: A Good Practice Guide,” (www.teachernet.gov.uk), should be read by all Group Leaders. It explains that their responsibility is to “**act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances.**” Staff members who take part in visits and activities outside school may feel concerned about the possibility of being held personally liable if an accident should occur. However they can be assured that Brockwood Park and Inwoods Small School, as their employer, is committed to supporting them in the unlikely event of an accident occurring, provided they have exercised reasonable care and followed the school’s guidelines.

Brockwood Park and Inwoods Small School have Employers’ Liability Insurance and Public Liability Insurance as well as a group travel policy that covers most visits inside the UK and overseas. Cover includes cancellation or delay, medical expenses, replacement of passports, personal possessions and money. The policy covers most school visits, but does not cover all adventurous activities, such as climbing, sand boarding or scuba diving. Any member of staff organising an adventurous or hazardous activity should therefore check, via the facilities, whether or not the activity is covered by the school’s policy and a risk assessment is needed and to be requested. An extension usually can be arranged. The Group Leader should ensure that s/he takes a copy of the school’s travel insurance with him/her when appropriate.

Pre-inspection visit

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Where possible it is good practice to inspect a location prior to planning a visit, in order to check its suitability.

- A pre-visit should be made by any leader of a visit abroad or a residential visit or where the activity or location is not familiar in order that an adequate assessment of the risks can be made.
- If a pre-visit is not feasible the group leader will need to consider how best to complete assessment of the risks.

Minibus policy

If you are using the school minibus you must be on the list of approved drivers. For visits involving travel over some distance, the driving should be shared and therefore the party should include at least two approved drivers per vehicle.

If you are using your own private vehicle on necessary school business to transport students you must have a valid driving license, with no penalty points. While the school's comprehensive insurance policy gives cover for such use of your vehicle, you must check your own insurance policy and how this is viewed by your insurance.

Students must be required to wear safety belts in all vehicles. It is the group leaders and staff who are responsible for ensuring that this requirement is enforced on all journeys.

If driving abroad it is likely that you will need to obtain an international driving license.

All drivers are given a driving assessment and are made aware of the health & safety/breakdown/accident information held in the glovebox of all minibuses. All minibuses undergo a safety inspection every 3 months, carried out by a professional mechanic.

Other travel arrangements

For train travel and underground, particular care needs to be given to the risk of students being separated from the rest of the groups and this must be set out in the risk assessment.

When travelling abroad students need to be briefed on matters such as securing passports and visas, baggage security and airport security checks. It is good practice that on arrival at the destination (or once all passport checks have been completed), the group leader collects all passports and stores them in a safe place, taking advantage of lockable facilities where possible.

When travelling on ferries it is good practice to establish a rendezvous point for the duration of the trip, enabling students to find a member of staff if needed. Advice on staying in small groups (age dependent) and clear instructions on meeting times should always be given.

First Aid

One member of staff must be nominated as being in charge of First Aid. It is a requirement that all residential trips have a qualified First Aider on their staff team. The need for a First Aider on day trips will be assessed as part of the risk assessment process. EYFS children on

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trips should have at least one member of staff in their care with a current paediatric first aid certificate. The First Aider will be:

- Responsible for the first aid bag. This should be taken on visits as appropriate.
- Liaise with the Infirmary before the trip to ensure any specific information or equipment/first aid kit is needed for the planned trip.
- Administer basic first aid, though the person responsible must be careful to avoid administering medical treatment beyond their training, skill and knowledge.
- Remain with the casualty while emergency help is summoned and, if needed, accompany the casualty to hospital.

Accommodation

Where overnight accommodation is involved, fire exits and emergency evacuation procedures should be checked by the group leaders on arrival. The groups should then be given a briefing/fire drill.

Students should know where the staff rooms are located and these should be in the vicinity of student accommodation. Group accommodation should be located in one area rather than scattered in different parts of a residential complex. As far as is reasonably possible, ground floor accommodation should be avoided for female students and there should be a clear divide (a staff room/accommodation is acceptable) between female and male accommodation. Wherever possible, male staff should not occupy a room on a corridor with female students. It is important to have proper details of the accommodation that is being provided before the visit, even if a pre-visit is not possible. The group leaders should have a room list. Clear expectations about behaviour should be set and a reminder that the agreements still apply; no girls in boys' accommodation and vice-versa.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessments must be approved by the Estate and Facilities Manager.

A separate Covid risk assessment must be completed by the trip leader and approved by the Covid lead. This is to be kept with the trip risk assessment on file.

All trips are evaluated to establish if there is a need for a risk assessment.

The risk assessment must:

- a) Identify specific hazards/risks.
- b) State who is at risk.
- c) Set out measures to control / minimise the risk.
- d) Establish the estimated risk.
- e) Set out the emergency procedure to be followed.

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All risk assessments must be visit specific and must cover the full itinerary. Risk assessments should be reviewed and, if necessary, updated, even for visits/expeditions that occur regularly.

If a licensed provider is responsible for a visit/activity, you are advised to ask for a copy of their own risk assessment and to refer to and include it as part of your own.

There must be an on-going risk assessment by group leaders and staff as the visit progresses and as circumstances require. Students must not be made to undertake or continue with an activity if they are expressing serious concerns about their health, well-being and overall safety.

Any questions relating to Health and Safety should be discussed with the Estate and Facilities Manager

Code of Conduct and behaviour

On all visits students should be reminded of the basic requirements of safeguarding the safety of each other, courtesy and consideration towards members of the public and each other and conduct that is in accordance with the intentions of the school. They should also be reminded that the agreements still apply on school trips – even if the trip is taking place in the school holidays.

For visits involving overnight and overseas visits students and parents should agree to the following as a minimum:

- Students carry out the instructions of the group leaders and staff at all times.
- Concerns or incidents should be reported to the Principal/School Coordinator as soon as possible for further actions to be considered.
- In mixed groups, girls and boys must not enter each other's rooms/areas.
- Students must adhere to all deadlines and meeting times. Group leaders must make proper arrangements to check in with students through frequent roll calls.

Remote supervision

Unsupervised time on a visit is no longer an acceptable concept. At all times group leaders and staff are responsible for students. Any period of remote supervision must be covered by the drawing of clear boundaries for students and emergency procedures on how contact with staff can be made. It is often good practice to issue students with a card giving mobile phone contact numbers of staff involved and the address and contact numbers of the place of residence if an overnight stay is involved. The associated hazards should be addressed in the overall risk assessment. On the expedition students should normally be in groups of at least three and be briefed on how to respond to an emergency.

Passports, Visas and EHIC

Group leaders should make a copy of all passports, visas and EHICs, and retain a copy throughout the visit. A second copy should be given to the Principal with the risk assessment before departure.

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Parental Consent

No student may go on an overnight visit without parents having given written consent by signing the consent form.

Parents must give this consent on the basis of having been fully informed of the arrangements for the visit. They should not be informed on a need to know basis only. When parents give their consent they should be aware of the following as applicable to the specific visit:

- The full itinerary, including travel arrangements.
- Any hazardous activities, the supervision and the risk assessment.
- Details of any period of remote supervision and the control measures in place.
- Insurance arrangements including insurance for hazardous activities (longer and overseas visits). Policy schedules must be provided as appropriate.
- Medical arrangements e.g. policy on the dispensing of medications (normally if a student needs to purchase and take any medication, he or she should obtain the necessary medication either in advance or at the time) Paracetamol should not be given to students who are taking other prescribed medications from a doctor. Aspirin or preparations containing Aspirin may not be given. If in doubt, please contact the Infirmary or if away during holiday time seek local medical advice.
- Full contact details of the hotel/place of residence (longer and overseas visits) and the group leaders.
- Parents should also be aware of the behaviour expected on the trip and consequences for students who get it wrong.

All staff should be given and retain through the visit a list of staff and students on the visit, along with their mobile number (where appropriate – and remembering to delete numbers as soon as the trip is over), their emergency contact number, hotel/accommodation details and contact details of the Principal/ School Coordinator.

Reporting incidents/near misses

Accidents to children, leaders and volunteers should be recorded or reported in accordance with the established procedures. In the case of a serious injury, the parents and the Principal/ School Coordinator must be informed as soon as possible.

Report on visit

You are asked to give some feedback to the Principal/ School Coordinator on your visit (particularly longer visits, expeditions, and overseas visits). A brief summary of the trip and any causes for concern should take place at this time.

Checklist for educational visits

The checklist below must be followed, as appropriate, by all staff planning an educational visit. This will ensure that:

- There are clear and justifiable objectives for the visit.
- The visit leader is clearly identified and sufficiently responsible and capable of taking charge of the visit.

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- Parental notification and consent has been undertaken.
- Participants are aware of the objectives and have been prepared and briefed appropriately.
- All transport arrangements have been adequately assessed.
- The venue is known to the trip leader or a pre visit assessment has been made to ensure the suitability of the site and to allow a risk assessment to be produced. (In some circumstances information from other parties may suffice) e.g. a reference from another school or information from a travel company risk assessment.
- Written risk assessments and control are produced. This is compulsory for all educational visits.
- A check is made of insurance requirements including that held by any firm providing services on the visit.
- An emergency procedure is in place and clear lines of communication between the school and the trip leader (staff) are established.

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Emergency procedures – carried by trip leaders

General Principles

- Ensure that all staff are briefed for a medical or missing person emergency.
- Ensure that the location of student medical details and trip insurance details are known to all staff.
- Manage communication effectively and write things down.

Medical Emergency/Accident

1. Take steps to prevent injury to others in your charge or in the vicinity. Enlist others to help you and give first aid.
2. Contact the emergency services and tour operator.
3. Arrange documentation required – EHIC, Insurance, Student medical details.
4. Arrange transport and staff supervision.
5. Contact School base-contact – who will inform parents.
6. Notify the British Embassy/Consulate if an emergency occurs abroad.
7. Manage communication by the rest of the group; explain why you will not allow students to phone home. Do not name the casualty or give other than brief factual information to local media after liaising with the base contact.
8. Record in writing – nature, date and time of incident; location of incident; names of casualties and details of their injuries; names of others involved so that parents can be reassured; action taken so far; action yet to be taken (and by whom).
9. No-one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties, nor sign anything relating to accident liability without clear advice from the School.

Missing Person

1. Make a plan with all supervising staff – have specific times to meet and review. Do not rely on mobile phones.
2. Manage and brief the rest of the group.
3. Ensure a system for communication between staff and base.
4. Contact local emergency services and tour operator; notify the British Embassy/Consulate if an emergency occurs abroad.
5. Contact the Principal/ School Coordinator base contact – who will inform parents.
6. Manage communication by the rest of the group; explain why you will not allow students to phone home. Do not name the missing person or give other than brief factual information to local media after liaising with the base contact.
7. Record in writing – nature, date and time of incident; location of incident; names of casualties and details of their injuries; names of others involved so that parents can be reassured; action taken so far; action yet to be taken (and by whom).
8. No-one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties, nor sign anything relating to accident liability without clear advice from their Trustees

Media

- Sympathy for those involved and their families.

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- Praise for those undertaking rescue/incident control.
- Promise full investigation/cooperation with other agencies.

Do not

- Do not reply to 'why' and 'how' questions
- Do not name individuals – explain that names will not be released until next of kin have been informed.
- Do not say 'no comment' – explain why you cannot comment and state when an update will be provided and by whom.