

## **Educational Visits Policy (Taken from the School Website Apr 18)**

Educational visits build skills for life, providing challenges, improved motivation, self-confidence and a sense of achievement. They can help children develop a good sense of communication, teamwork, organisation, independence and leadership, as well as learning and social skills. They also contribute to a child's spiritual and personal development, promoting improved understanding and awareness of the environment, other cultures and real world learning. This includes adequate preparation for and follow up after the visit as part of the learning process.

- All visits should have an identifiable educational benefit, with clear objectives linked to the school's vision for outdoor off-site activities.
- All visits should be led by a competent visit leader and the appropriate number of supporting adults for that age range.
- All those involved in the organisation and running of educational visits will comply with National, Oxfordshire and the school's guidelines on the health and safety of participants on educational visits.
- The management of all visits will be based on the outcome of suitable and sufficient risk assessments and group leaders will ensure that such risk assessments are carried out as part of the planning process.
- It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that the risk to the health and safety of participants is minimised by a process of continuous vigilance and ongoing risk assessment.

Oxfordshire County Council has adopted the OEAP Employer Guidance as its operating guidance for the management of visits and Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) activities. (National guidance <http://oeapng.info> OCC guidance <http://www.oxfordshireoutdoorlearningservice.co.uk>)

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **Head teacher**

The Head teacher is committed to implementing the national guidance and is familiar with OCC's policies for outdoor learning, off-site visits and Learning Outside the Classroom. All activities and visits comply with this guidance and are notified or submitted for formal approval as required. The Head teacher will also ascertain that all staff involved are competent to carry out the responsibilities they are allocated. It is a requirement of the Head teacher's role to designate a suitable member of staff as the EVC (Educational Visits Co-ordinator) and ensure that that person undertakes EVC training as recommended or required. (See attached national guidance *The Role of The Head teacher*)

#### **Educational Visits Co-ordinator**

As well as supporting the Head teacher with the approval and planning of trips, the EVC is required to monitor and support staff with visit planning and ensure that essential information regarding first aid, medical and special needs and emergency contact is obtained. (See attached national guidance *The Role of The EVC*).

## Visit leader

The Visit Leader has the overall responsibility for supervision and conduct of the visit. To ensure accountability and to avoid potential confusion, a single Visit Leader should be appointed. If this role changes during a visit, a clear handover should be made.

The key requirements for Visit Leaders are that they must be accountable, competent and confident to lead the visit/activity, not that they hold a particular post, title or job description. (See attached national guidance *The Role of The Visit Leader*).

## Procedural Requirements for visits

- Consult EVC/Head with regard to planning and risk assessment of the visit. A visit approval form should be completed and submitted to head or EVC.
- Check date with head/office and put in the school diary.
- Liaise with office for coach quotes, entrance fees, tickets and 10% admin charge.
- Write letter for parents, making sure educational aims of the visit are clearly stated and including the final cost per child. The letter should also include details of any 'plan b' activities in case any part of the visit is cancelled.
- Forward to head for final approval of letter and visit (with visit approval form if not already submitted).
- Kitchen to be informed of trip at least two weeks in advance or as soon as possible.
- Head to return approved letter to visit leader to distribute a hard copy. The visit leader should also upload the letter to the school website for each class involved.
- Head to forward final letter to office for h-drive.
- Office to produce checklist for class and send in register.
- Return slips and money should be collected by class TA who should chase any late payments/slips 3 days before the trip. Collected money should then be returned to the office for recording.
- Staff who are required to go on the trip must be informed at least a week in advance so that they can organise cover for playtime/lunchtime etc.
- **A Risk-benefit assessment** must be carried out a week in advance of the visit (where possible) and passed to the EVC or Head teacher for approval. Visit leaders must make an **emergency action plan** for each risk-benefit assessment.

## Monitoring of visits, induction and training

Visits are monitored by the head and EVC as well as by key stage leaders through monitoring of planning as well as the successful completion of the visit. Where problems have occurred, correct procedures are followed and steps are taken to ensure that they are not repeated on subsequent

visits. Field observation is not carried out by the head or EVC as staffing levels do not allow for this and both are closely involved in the planning process.

Records of visits are kept for 3 years or 7 where a medical incident or injury has occurred. The EVC is required to re-validate their training every 3 years and all members of staff are offered visit leader training. All new staff are supported in planning visits in accordance with school and national procedures and are supported with visit planning by the EVC.

### **Risk management and risk-benefit assessment**

St. Ebbe's has adopted Oxfordshire Outdoor Learning's recommended risk-benefit assessment form when used in conjunction with the school's visit approval form. All visit leaders should complete a visit approval form as part of their planning process and submit this to the head or EVC for approval. The risk-benefit assessment form should be completed at least a week before the visit where this is possible. Both forms may be completed electronically or as hard copy.

### **Assessing venues and providers**

All venues should be investigated before a visit. Where possible this should include visiting the venue in advance so that risk-benefit assessment is well-informed. Where an advance visit is not possible visit leaders should make every effort to check out the suitability of the venue and planned activities through the company's website and through direct liaison with the venue or activity provider. Whilst it is not necessary for visit leaders to obtain a copy of the venue or activity provider's risk assessment, they should ask for any information that is specifically aimed at helping visit leaders to manage their visit. Visit leaders should also take advantage of national schemes that monitor the suitability of activity providers e.g. LOTC Quality badge, AALA Licence, Adventuremark etc.

### **Volunteers**

Volunteers should be fully briefed in advance of a visit and should be given all necessary information regarding itineraries and risk-benefit assessment. Where volunteers are to be left in charge of a group they will require an enhanced DBS check as in accordance with employer's guidance.

### **Emergency procedures and incident reporting**

In case of an emergency on a visit the visit leader should implement their emergency action plan. This would involve securing the immediate safety of staff and children before calling the emergency services, if necessary, and then informing the school of the situation. The school will then inform parents and carers as well as taking over responsibility for managing the situation where possible.

As part of the visit planning process an emergency contact will have been nominated to provide 24 hour emergency contact. The emergency contact should have 24 hour access to all details of the visit, including next-of-kin information regarding staff and young people.

In the case of injury or incident the school's incident reporting procedures will be followed.

## **Behaviour**

Both staff and children are expected to follow the school behaviour policy when on educational visits. Clear guidelines for appropriate behaviour should be given in advance of the visit to ensure the safety of all involved and to reduce the opportunity for misunderstanding of expectations and the sanctions that may be involved where the policy is not followed. Any venue rules (e.g. no mobile phones on residential visits) should be made clear in advance of the visit. In rare circumstances, the head teacher reserves the right to withdraw permission for a child to attend an off site visit.

## **Inclusion**

St. Ebbe's is an inclusive school which believes in the right of all children to take part in educational visits and will take all possible steps to ensure that young people are able to participate fully in educational visits, regardless of circumstances that make it difficult for them to do so. Where there are special circumstances visit leaders must be supported by the head, SENCO or EVC, so that what is required of those staffing the trip is both reasonable and within their competence.

## **Insurance**

All visits are covered through the school's insurance policy.

## **Finance**

Schools may not charge for education provided during school hours or for transport provided in connection with an educational visit. They may charge for board and lodging provided as part of a residential visit except for parents who are in receipt of certain benefits. (See attached national guidance *Charging for School Activities*.) Restrictions on charging do not prohibit the school from asking for voluntary contributions. Parents will be provided with written information explaining the benefits of the visit and the financial cost of the visit per student. The information should make clear that no student will be excluded if they are unable to contribute, however parents should also be informed whether the visit may be cancelled if sufficient contributions are not received.