

Educational Visits Policy

At The Beeches Primary School we recognise that Educational Visits and Learning Outside of the Classroom is an important part of children's learning. Well planned and implemented learning outside the classroom contributes significantly to raising standards and improving pupils' personal, social and emotional development (Ofsted, Learning Outside the Classroom, 2008). Learning outside the classroom is an integral element of curriculum planning. We endeavour to make consistent of our own buildings, grounds and the neighbouring area and beyond to support learning. Learning objectives for learning outside the classroom need to be defined and integrated with learning in the classroom.

Roles and Responsibilities

- The **governors** need to ensure there is an Educational Visits Policy and this is implemented within school and is reviewed every two years
- The **head teacher** has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that educational visits follow the agreed procedures in 'Guidance for Off-Site Visits and Related Activities with 'EVOLVE'. The head teacher is responsible for ensuring that there is an Educational Visits Coordinator and this person has received the appropriate training and is competent in this role. The head teacher may delegate the responsibility of approving visits to the Educational Visits Coordinator.
- **Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)** is responsible for approving any educational visits (through the EVOLVE system) and assessing if the visit leader is competent to run the intended activity or visit using the guidance in Section 10 of 'Guidance for Off-Site Visits and Related Activities with 'EVOLVE'
- The **Visit Leader** is the member of staff who is leading the visit. The visit leader is responsible for the completion of any risk assessments prior to the visit and logging the visit on EVOLVE. The competence of the visit leader is the single most important contributory factor in the safety of participants; they should be competent to run the intended activity or visit. Other employees (Instructors, Coaches, and Teaching Assistants etc) may function as a Visit Leader, providing they are competent to carry out this role.
- **Accompanying staff** need to follow agreed risk assessments, policies and practice to ensure the safe running of the visit. Prior to the visit, staff must ensure that they understand what is expected of them and have seen the EVOLVE plan and risk assessment.
- **Parents** are responsible for completing and returning requested documentation and ensuring they are contactable throughout the visit.
- **Children** need to follow instructions, the school rules, the behaviour policy and any additional 'rules' that will be in place for the visit.

Educational Visits Policy

Guidance for Off-Site Visits and Related Activities

We follow the guidance in Peterborough City Council's Guidance for Off-Site Visits and Related Activities with 'EVOLVE'. This document provides concise and supportive guidance for the planning and management of off-site visits and related activities. It contains guidance on;

- Role of the Educational Visits Coordinator
- Approval of Visits
- Outcomes
- Inclusion
- Responsibilities
- Planning
- Safety during the visit
- Parent / Carer consent
- Competence to lead
- Staffing and supervision
- First Aid
- Insurance
- Transport
- Farm visits
- Water-margin activities
- Residential visits
- Overseas visits
- Weather, clothing & survival
- Swimming
- Definition of an adventurous activity
- Adventurous activities
- Water-based activities
- Open-country activities
- Snowsports
- Overseas expeditions
- Emergency procedures
- Approval of staff to lead an adventurous activity
- Using an external provider or tour operator

This guidance is available to all staff through the EVOLVE system (www.peterboroughvisits.org.uk) and hard copies are available in the staffroom, on our learning platform and from the EVC. The online guidance, on EVOLVE, provides links to additional information and is the most up to date version. This guidance also contains the required forms.

Educational Visits Policy

EVOLVE

We use the web-based system 'EVOLVE' to ensure efficient planning, management, approval, and evaluation of visits. All visits must be planned, logged and approved through this system. This is accessed at www.peterboroughvisits.org.uk.

Approval of Visits

Based on the visit types, EVOLVE automatically directs the flow for approval. All visits must be submitted for approval by the EVC at least one week before the intended visit.

Approval is delegated to the Educational Visits Coordinator or Head teacher for all visits, except for the following visit types:

- **overseas**
- **residential**
- involving an **adventurous activity** (as defined in Section 21 Guidance for Off-Site Visits and Related Activities with 'EVOLVE')

The above three categories are 'authorised' within the establishment, but must be 'approved' by the LA via EVOLVE.

Planning of Visits

The extent of planning required is related to the complexity of the visit. When planning visits staff should refer to; 'Planning with EVOLVE diagram,' the 'Visit Leader Checklist' and the 'risk assessment form' (using the RADAR_model: based on STAGED: Staffing, Timings, Activity, Group, Environment, Distance.) All of these documents are contained within Guidance for Off-Site Visits and Related Activities with 'EVOLVE.'

Risks are expected to be reduced to an *acceptable or tolerable* level, and not necessarily eliminated. Planning should achieve a rational balance between potential adverse risks and the intended benefits and outcomes of the activity.

Due to the complex nature of off-site visits, conventional 'risk assessment' as a stand-alone tool is not particularly useful and can on occasion be misleading. It is of greater benefit to consider the overall 'risk management' of visits by taking all aspects of visit planning and management into account. This can be achieved effectively through a combination of the EVOLVE visit form itself, and where appropriate, any event specific notes, risk assessments or attachments.

Regular Local Visits and Activities

Regular local visits and activities such as; swimming lessons at the Regional Pool, sporting fixtures, walking visits to locations within the centre of Peterborough and coach travel are covered by generic risk assessments which form the agreed principles for conducting these visits. However, these may need to be accompanied by a STAGED risk assessment (Staffing, Timings, Activity, Group, Environment, Distance) if any of these aspects are not covered

Educational Visits Policy

adequately in the generic risk assessment. These visits, apart from swimming lessons, need to be logged onto EVLOVE, but may not necessarily need a separate risk assessment.

Ongoing Risk Assessment

Monitoring of the visit must be on-going during the visit, and this contributes towards both enjoyment and safety.

It is primarily the responsibility of the visit leader, in consultation with other staff where appropriate, to modify or curtail the visit or activity (eg Plan B) to suit changed or changing circumstances - for example: over-busy lunch area, rain etc.

Following the visit, the visit leader should record any significant issues as a note on EVOLVE, for both reference and to inform future visits.

Parental/Carer Consent

Written consent from parents is not required for pupils to take part in the majority of off-site activities organised by a school as most of these activities take place during school hours and are a normal part of a child's education at school. However, parents should be told where their child will be at all times and of any extra safety measures required.

Written consent is only requested for activities that need a higher level of risk management or those that take place outside school hours, for example for adventure activities, off-site sporting fixtures outside the school day or residential visits.

Inclusion

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate against disabled participants because of their disability, without material or substantial justification. We will make reasonable adjustments to avoid participants being placed at a substantial disadvantage. However, the Disability Discrimination Act does not require the school to place employees or participants at inappropriate risk if a health and safety issue arises. It is also the case that the adjustments made to include a disabled young person should not impinge unduly on the planned purpose of the activity.

Written – April 2012

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