

# *Stepney Primary School*



*A Small School With Great Expectations*

## **Educational Visits Policy**

At Stepney raising the achievement and basic skills of pupils and ensuring that they reach their full potential is the responsibility of all staff

## 1. AIMS

Pupils can derive a good deal of educational benefit from taking part in visits with their school. In particular, they have the opportunity to undergo experiences not available in the classroom. Visits can help to develop a pupil's investigative skills and longer visits in particular can encourage greater independence. This policy has been designed to give guidance to help headteachers, teachers, governors and others to ensure that pupils stay safe and healthy on school visits.

The very fact that most trips and visits take place without incident is evidence of the fact that the vast majority of staff already takes a responsible attitude and trips are well managed.

The value of trips and visits for young people cannot be over emphasised. No amount of planning can guarantee that a visit will be totally incident free, but good planning and attention to safety measures can reduce the number of accidents and lessen the seriousness of those that might happen nonetheless.

The content of the policy includes elements of good practice identified within procedures used by other Local Authorities and best practice used within outdoor education.

This guidance sets out principles that Stepney follows with the aims of reducing the likelihood that accidents will occur to the lowest level possible and implementing sound management practices to ensure that the risk of incidents occurring is low.

## **2. VISITS AND OFFSITE ACTIVITIES POLICY**

### **2.1 Eligibility**

This policy will apply to all visits and off-site activities managed and run by any section of the authority where staff of the authority are acting in a parental or supervisory role.

### **2.2 Scope and Purpose**

- This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and others working for or on behalf of the School.
- The policy applies to all aspects of all visits, off-site and outdoor activities.

## **3. POLICY OBJECTIVES**

- To ensure that the School complies with all relevant legislation and guidance issued by the DfES, HSE and other relevant bodies covering visits and offsite activities.
- To support all staff and volunteers in meeting the demands placed on them to carry out these activities by the setting up of a procedure, relevant guidance and training as required.
- To facilitate the development of a procedure and a range of guidance documents to assist in the provision of appropriate visits and offsite activities for people that are safe.
- The School will ensure a competent person is identified, within each section of the organisation that is covered by this policy to advise and co-ordinate visits and offsite activities.

## **4. PRE-VISIT REQUIREMENTS**

Thorough planning and preparation are essential for the safety and well being of all participants in any visit, journey or activity. It must take place as early as possible to ensure that sufficient time is available to consider all aspects of the visit and to enable sufficient time to visits/activities to be notified and approved as stated within your user specific guidance.

It is important to ensure at this stage that the appropriate level of staffing is available so that any helpers are police checked and that the competence required for the visit/activities is available.

## **5. PARENTAL CONSENT**

Parental consent must be sought for each and every visit.

## **6. MEDICAL CONSENT**

Parents must complete a consent form for each visit and agree to their child receiving any necessary medical treatment considered necessary by the medical authorities.

## **7. DOCUMENTATION**

The group leader will ensure that either they or a nominated person(s) within the group carries all relevant documentation at all times. Such documentation will include the relevant activity risk assessments, emergency contact lists, insurance details, activity provider details, maps and timetables, entrance tickets, list of pupils (including medical and special needs, aptitude and behaviour), staff and helpers on the visit, parent contact details if necessary.

A copy of all these documents will also be held at the school.

## **8. MISBEHAVIOUR**

Any person(s) misbehaving or acting in a manner that may endanger themselves or any other group members must be removed from the visit/activity being undertaken.

Where this reduces the levels of supervision to below the minimum identified within the risk assessment the visit or activity must be stopped for everyone in the group. Pupils will be made aware of these conditions prior to any visit taking place.

## **9. RISK ASSESSMENTS**

Risk assessments are completed before a visit takes place to minimise risk.

- Risk assessments will be completed by the visit leader undertaking or supervising the activity, with control measures identifying safe ways of carrying out the activity and reducing risk of injury.
- If no safe means of undertaking the activity can be identified and the risk is assessed as being substantial or unacceptable, the activity will not take place.
- There may be the need to undertake immediate steps to modify or amend a risk assessment to add some new or different hazards or risks that arise during an activity or visit. Leaders will be competent to do this effectively.
- If alterations to expected activity are over and above those anticipated the group leader will exercise their leadership skills, knowledge and experience of the activity and conditions to implement immediate changes. Changes may include stopping

the activity and returning to base; seeking immediate shelter and returning to the last known position; changing the route being taken.

- The actions taken and the reasoning behind taking those actions will be recorded as soon as it is possible to do so and include any debriefing.

## **10. STOPPING AN ACTIVITY OR VISIT**

If the level of risk to any pupils or other participants is assessed as being unacceptable the group leader, or in their absence the person in charge of the activity, will stop the activity.

## **11. ACCIDENT/VIOLENT INCIDENT REPORTING**

Any accident or violent incident that occurs will be recorded using the relevant forms and will be completed as soon after the incident as possible. This will be submitted once the visit has finished. However, if the incident results in any member of the party being taken to hospital from the scene of an incident, or a member of staff being incapacitated and not being able to continue in their supervisory role after an incident, the school will be notified so that the Head/Deputy Head may discuss whether the party needs to return to school or is able to carry on with some or all of the planned activities.

## **12. EMERGENCY PROCEDURE**

If an emergency occurs everyone supervising the visit/activity understands their respective role in the emergency and is able to effectively put the procedure into action.

## **13. INSURANCE**

All visits are covered by Hull City Council Insurance.

## **14. TRANSPORT**

- At the beginning of the year we assess the PE2 form completed by the Coach/Bus Operators which provides a means by which the school requests information from the operator to satisfy themselves that suitable safety management systems are in place, and that appropriate operating procedures are followed. A new PE2 form is not necessary at the start of the new year if the level of safety and service provided in the past by these companies has been satisfactory.

- At the planning stage the group leader should make reasonable enquiries to be satisfied that any transport provider is reputable and has competent drivers who hold the relevant Licence and that the vehicles to be used are suitable for the purpose.
- Regulations came into force in February 1997 requiring the fitting of seat belts to minibuses and coaches. Where minibuses or coaches are used wholly or mainly to transport groups of three or more children aged between 3 and 15 inclusive, seat belts (lap belts as a minimum) must be fitted. There must be sufficient forward facing seats for the number of children being carried. Service buses (i.e. without seatbelts) should only be used within the city boundary but excluding the Clive Sullivan Way.
- Transport issues will be included at the planning stage to ensure that any driver does not have to drive excessive hours. Sufficient time will be built in to the visit schedule to prevent driver fatigue and that regular breaks on long journeys are scheduled to help prevent driver and passenger fatigue.
- The group leader or other nominated person should before setting off undertake a visual check of any vehicle to be used as part of the visit.
- If they believe a vehicle to, either not comply with legal requirements or exhibits readily identifiable defects (e.g. bald tyres) the vehicle must not be used.
- Consideration is also given to the use of other modes of transport and the levels of supervision required on them (e.g. ships, planes, trains and buses shared with members of the public). All children must be seated for what ever mode of transport used. There must be enough seats for every pupil to sit.
- During any visit the driver is responsible for the vehicle but should not be expected to supervise the group being transported. A member of staff(s) will always be in attendance and will take full responsibility for the group.

#### **15. HEADTEACHER/EDUCATIONAL VISIT CO-ORDINATOR (EVC)**

Headteacher/EVCs will ensure that visits comply with regulations and guidelines provided by the LA or Governing Body and the schools' own Health and Safety Policy. Headteacher/EVCs should ensure that the Visit (Group) Leader is competent to monitor the risks that have been identified before the event and any that become known during the visit.

#### **16. ADDITIONAL VISIT STAFF**

Additional staff must do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances.

They should:

- follow the instructions of the Visit (Group) Leader and help with control and discipline;
- consider stopping the visit or the activity, notifying the Visit (Group) Leader, if they think the risk to the health or safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable.

## **17. ADULT VOLUNTEERS**

Non-teacher adults on the visit will be made clear about their roles and responsibilities during the visit. Visit (Group) Leaders should ensure that volunteers are made aware of their specific role and responsibilities and of the content of the risk assessment relating to the visit at a pre-visit meeting.

Non-teacher adults must:

- do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group;
- not be left in sole charge of pupils except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment;
- follow the instructions of the Visit (Group) Leader and teacher supervisors and help with control and discipline;
- speak to the Visit (Group) Leader or teacher supervisors if concerned about the health or safety of pupils at any time during the visit; not be accompanied by any children other than those school pupils who are eligible to be participating in the visit.

## **18. CHARGING FOR VISITS**

In schools the education provided wholly or mainly during school hours is free. This means that Headteacher may not impose a charge on parents for any visit that occurs during school hours. A voluntary contribution may, however, be asked for.

Parents should be made aware that the contribution is not compulsory, and the children of parents who do not contribute will not be discriminated against. It is permissible to ask parents to contribute more than the minimum amount in order to subsidise those pupils whose parents have not contributed or who are not able to contribute. In the last resort if sufficient contributions cannot be raised and the shortfall cannot be made up, the visit may have to be cancelled.

The Headteacher may, however, charge parents for board and lodging on residential visits as well as the full costs when a visit is deemed to be an 'optional extra'.

An optional extra:

- falls wholly or mainly outside of school hours;
- does not form part of the national Curriculum;
- is not part of a syllabus towards a Prescribed Public Examination;
- is not in scope of statutory requirements relating to religious education.

Under the above definition a skiing trip during the school holidays would be an optional extra. The Headteacher should obtain the parents' agreement to meet the costs of an optional extra visit before it is planned in detail. Charging parents for an optional extra visit may not include an element of subsidy in respect of other pupils whose families do not meet the full charge. On residential visits that are not optional extras, or which take place during school hours, some parents, in receipt of certain state benefits, may have board and lodging costs remitted.

**(Also see Charging Policy)**

## 19. SUPERVISION

### 19.1 Ratios

There is no law that lays down appropriate staff: pupil ratios for educational visits. The responsibility for staffing levels rests with the headteacher/EVC. It is not possible to give precise ratios for all situations; however the following general principles should assist Visit (Group) Leaders to arrive at a practical solution.

There should be a minimum of one teacher in charge. (See below)  
There must be a minimum of one teacher for every thirty pupils.  
There should be a minimum of two adults per party one of whom should be a qualified teacher.

The ratio of pupils to teachers/responsible adults must not exceed: <b>Category of visit</b>	<b>Under 5 and reception</b>	<b>Years 1 – 3</b>	<b>Years 4 – 6</b>	<b>Year 7 and over</b>
1,2	1:3	1:6	1:15	1:20
3	1:2	1:4	1:10	1:15
4,5	1:1	1:3	1:6	1:10
Swimming in local swimming pool	Not permitted	1:4	1:12	1:20
Swimming in sea or natural water	Not permitted	Not permitted	Not permitted	1:10

### 19.2 Head counts

Whatever the length and nature of a visit, regular head counting of pupils will take place, particularly before leaving any venue and before any means of transport is allowed to depart.

## 20. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Every effort will be made to ensure that school trips and visits are available and accessible to all who wish to participate. All young people should be encouraged to take part in as wide a range of activities as possible. Pupils with specific educational or medical needs may only be excluded from any trip or visit after every reasonable effort has been made to enable them to participate. If their participation cannot reasonably be enabled and it is likely that their health and safety and the health and safety of others on the trip or visit will be compromised the Headteacher/EVC must decide whether to exclude them from the visit or not allow the visit to take place at all.

## **21. PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

We will already be familiar with the nature of a pupil's special educational needs. Any limitations or problems the pupil may have will be taken into account at the planning stage and when carrying out the risk assessment.

## **22. MONITORING AND REVIEW ARRANGEMENTS**

The policy, procedures and associated guidance will be reviewed on a regular basis (at least every two years) and within one month, where any unsafe incident not covered by the documentation is identified.

This policy was produced in Spring 2010 by the Mrs M Codd.  
Educational Visit Co-ordinator

To be reviewed in Spring 2012