

The Federation of Heavers Farm and Selsdon Primary Schools

SCHOOL JOURNEY AND VISITS POLICY

Updated June 2021

INTRODUCTION

This document offers guidance procedures for school visits. Any visit should be evaluated on its merits by competent and experienced adults

At our schools, we recognise the importance of school visits and journeys as being fundamental to our pupil's development.

What Counts as an Educational Visit?

Walks to local places of interest, places of worship or visits by coach count as educational visits and these guidelines apply.

Visits should have a clear educational focus and be linked to what it being taught that half term. Wherever possible, the adults planning the visit, should visit the venue beforehand to help prepare the risk assessment.

Inclusion

All visits and activities should be made available to accessible to **all children**, irrespective of special needs, disability, medical needs, ethnic origin, sex or religion. If a visit is to cater for young people with special needs, consideration should be given to the selection of suitable venues.

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

The following basic information **must be given to parents and carers before any visit.**

- Date, time and purpose of visit
- Travel arrangements
- The of name of the person leading the visit
- The name of the person responsible for administrating first aid
- Supervision arrangements
- Emergency arrangements
- Any costs that they may have to cover
- Arrangements for collecting their child at the end of the visit

Written parental permission must be on record for all trips. Parents/carers must sign the one-off trip permission form, which must be kept in the child's file in the school office. The office will record this information on SIMS. This one-off permission form will cover permission for all trips and visits with the exception of residential trips (see below).

Parents/carers can request that their child does not attend a particular trip. They should do this in writing before the date of the trip.

Approval and Agreement for Residential Visits

Parents and carers will need to sign a specific permission form for each residential visit. This is in addition to the

RISK ASSESSMENT

Safety must always be the prime consideration in all visits. Young people must not be put into situations that expose them to unacceptable levels of risk. If the risks cannot be contained then the visit **must not take place**.

Risk Assessments must be carried out at the planning stage.

Every educational visit or off-site activity **must have** an associated risk assessment. The generic risk assessments provided must be adapted to your particular visit. Risk assessments should be completed **well in advance** of the visit. You may need some time to have all your control measures arranged prior to the visit.

Adapting risk assessments

Legally, risk assessments must be 'suitable and sufficient' i.e. appropriate to the nature of the work. This means all the main hazards that arise out of the activities or the environment must be identified; those hazards must then be controlled to acceptable standards and the level of residual risk judged.

If these generic risk assessments are not adapted, they will not be suitable and sufficient and our school could be open to legal proceedings.

At least two risk assessments **must be** completed by the visit leader and signed by the Head of School before the date of the trip. This includes a **general educational visits risk assessment** and a **general travel risk assessment**. There are a number of generic risk assessments for typical educational visits e.g. museum trips, woodlands etc. which must be completed **in addition** to the above. A number of risk assessments are available on Fronter in Croydon's Health and Safety Room.

How to complete the risk assessment forms:

1. Start with the "general" and "general travel" risk assessments and adapt them for your situation;
2. Then choose the generic risk assessment most suitable for your visit;
3. The generic risk assessments list typical hazards, you may identify others by, for example:
 - Conducting a pre-visit to the location
 - Speak with the organisation
 - Consult with other staff who have visited the site
4. Add any additional hazards you identified to the risk assessment;
5. Use the control measures already listed in the generic risk assessment as a starting point, there may be some that are not relevant and there may be others that have not been included. Amend this column as appropriate;
6. Make judgements about the residual risks i.e. those that are left when you have implemented the controls;
7. Complete the column for severity and likelihood;
8. Complete the column for the risk rating;
9. Where the risks are intolerable the visit should not be approved until further controls are arranged to reduce the risk;

10. Where the risks are substantial or moderate, develop the action plan and ensure that controls are in place before the date of the visit;
11. Sign and date the risk assessment;
12. The risk assessment should be approved by the Headteacher;
All supervisors on the visit should be informed of the outcome of the risk assessment so that they understand the controls etc.;
13. Continue to monitor the risk assessment.

Ongoing/dynamic risk assessment

Circumstances may change during a visit and staff on the visit will need to alter and change their plans accordingly. These changes are not usually recorded at the time.

However your generic risk assessment should be updated at the end of the trip to assist the planning process for subsequent visits.

When considering controls the following hierarchy should be considered in order:

1. Avoid / Eliminate
2. Substitute
3. Enclose
4. Guard / Segregate
5. Safe system of work
6. Supervision
7. Written procedures
8. Information & training
9. Personal protective equipment (last resort)

Visits requiring Croydon's approval

Formal approval from Croydon is required for insurable visits by using the Evolve site.

Insurable visits are defined as occasions during which young people

- Visit countries abroad – including exchange visits
- Visit UK destinations for more than 24 hours
- Take part in a visit involving a special risk regardless of duration or destination

List of Pupils and Itinerary

A list of all pupils and names of all staff with their home contact numbers involved in the visit, however short, should be left in the school office in a prominent position. A copy of the itinerary should also be left in the same place.

TRANSPORT

Careful thought needs to be given when planning the transport for the visit. This aspect must be included in the risk assessment.

Coaches

The group leader should ensure that the coach is hired from a reputable company. It is important to ensure that the school and the coach company know what is expected. Do not rely on verbal communications, make sure that everything you need is written down and understood by the company. For example: times of departure and return; exact pick-up points; rest stops. If the coach driver is to be with you for several days discuss this with the company so they send a driver who is happy to be with a group of young people for a number of days.

All children should be counted on and off the coach, wear seatbelts and remain seated throughout the journey. The coach company used should be one from the list that Croydon Council recommends for educational visits. Pupils are not allowed to eat or drink on the coach and a "sick" bucket and first aid kit should accompany each coach.

Private Cars

If private vehicles are used the group leader must ensure that the drivers are appropriately insured and are aware of the legal responsibility for the safety of the young people in their vehicle. Parents must be made aware and agree to their child being transported in a private vehicle.

Any adults driving young people **should not be put in a position whereby they are alone** with a child. The group leader should ensure there are central dropping off points rather than individual home drops

Transport by foot

Ensure that you have sufficient adults to supervise pupils as they walk along pavements and cross the road.

Children should be in **pairs** and be encouraged to keep together. There should be adult supervisors at the front and at the back of the group with others distributed amongst the group. The adult at the rear of the group must remain at the back to ensure that nobody is left behind.

Crossing the road – this must only take place at safe places. Where possible use Zebra crossings and traffic lights. An adult should be on each side of the road until all have crossed.

Buses, Trains and Trams

Pupils should be aware of procedures and rules during travel. They should be counted on and off any form of transport and remain seated throughout the journey. If possible tickets should be purchased before the journey and the company informed of pupil numbers and times. London Transport does assist organisation of school journeys and should be contacted for advice.

INSPECTION VISITS

Knowledge of the environment to be visited is essential to ensure that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and purpose of the visit.

A pre-visit will help the group leader:

- become familiar with the area
- assess potential areas and levels of risk

- ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the group

A pre-visit is **essential** if the visit is an entirely school-led activity.

If a pre-visit is not possible information should be gathered from one or more of the following:

- detailed discussion with a colleague who has visited the area previously
- detailed discussion with the centre manager (if appropriate)
- information from local tourist boards
- information from other schools who have visited the venue recently

Many schools visit the same venue each year. It is good practice to re-assess the risks each time as some factors may change.

CHARGING FOR VISITS

The group leader should ensure that parents have early written information about the cost; how much will come from school funds and how much each parent will be charged or asked to contribute. Parents should be given sufficient time to prepare, financially for the visit.

Breaking down the costs into travel, accommodation, meals, hire of equipment may be useful.

Visits during school hours

Headteachers may not impose a charge for visit that takes place during the school hours. The headteacher may ask for a **voluntary** contribution.

Parents should be made aware that the contribution is not compulsory and the young people whose parents do not contribute will not be discriminated against.

Headteachers may ask parents to contribute more than the minimum in order to subsidise those young people whose parents have not contributed. The visit may have to be cancelled if there are insufficient voluntary contributions and the shortfall cannot be made up.

Charges for board and lodging on residential visits will be made (see Charging Policy)

FIRST AID

The group leader should assess what level of first aid may be required on the visit. On any visit the group leader should ensure that an adequate first aid box is taken. If children from EYFS are on the trip then a paediatric first aider must be present on the trip.

For visits abroad, residential visits or when adventurous activities are taking place at least one member of staff must be qualified and competent to administer first aid.

All adults in the group should know how to contact the emergency services.

The minimum first-aid provision for a visit should be:

- a suitably stocked first aid box
- an adult appointed to be in charge of first aid

Also consider:

- the numbers in the group and the nature of the activity
- the likely injuries and how effective first aid would be
- the distance to the nearest hospital

Administering medicines/tablets

Please refer to the schools Supporting Children with Medical Needs Policy.

CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS

Pupils with special educational needs or medical needs **should not** be excluded from visits. Arrangements should be made to include them whilst maintaining the safety of everyone on the visit. Special attention should be given to supervision ratios and any additional safety measure at the planning stage.

Children with medical needs

Additional safety measures to those already in place in the school may be necessary to support these pupils.

The group leader will need to ensure that:

- the young person has sufficient medication for the duration of the visit
- all staff are aware of the young person's needs and how to deal with an emergency
- a key supervisor is trained to administer medication and to be responsible for the young person in an emergency
- the young person's needs have been discussed with the parents/carers
- the venue is suitably equipped for the young person's needs
- the insurance policy covers pupils with medical needs

Young people with special educational needs

Any limitations or problems that the pupil may have, including challenging behaviour, should be considered and planned for in the initial planning stage

The group leader should consider the following.

- Is the young person capable of taking part?
- Can the activities be adapted to suit the needs of all?
- Can the young person understand and follow instructions?
- Will additional supervision be required?

WEATHER

Please remember that weather can change rapidly in this country and changes will be more varied in mountainous and coastal areas. Water conditions will be affected by wind, tide, and recent rainfall. Do take notice of local conditions and seek out local information. This is particularly important when taking young people into remote areas, hills, mountains, caves, out to sea or on large areas of open water.

CLOTHING

All children must be suitably clothed and equipped for the activity they are taking part in. This includes children wearing coats, hats etc for outside activities.

MOBILE TELEPHONES

Mobile telephones can be extremely useful in many circumstances in order to keep in contact with the home base and if the group splits up. However there are circumstances where they are subject to technical difficulties and will not work. Please plan your activities without reliance on mobile telephones.

Children **are not** permitted mobile phones on school visits.

SUPERVISION

Duty of Care

Please make sure that all adults accompanying children on the visit understand the implications of their duty of care. This duty of care is continuous throughout the whole period of the visit and cannot be delegated to anyone else. **All adults on any visit are expected to exercise the same degree of responsibility for the young people in their care as would any reasonable parent when looking after his or her own children.**

The **group leader** must make clear the delegation of roles and responsibilities to all staff and adult helpers.

If small groups are involved **one teacher** or **member of school staff** must be in charge of each group. Lists of group members, which includes contact numbers and medical information, must be carried by all responsible adults when the party splits up.

Accompanying Adults

Accompanied visits must always be in the charge of a qualified teacher. The group leader must take responsibility for the whole group and appoint a deputy.

Headteachers must ensure that as a minimum there are never less than two responsible adults with any group, one of whom must be a **qualified teacher** or **member of school staff**.

Each adult should be briefed in full about the details of the visit, learning intentions, number of children and any relevant issues. Copies of the written brief should be attached to the risk assessment. Any staff member who is not completely comfortable with the responsibility should discuss this with the Headteacher as an arrangement should be reached under these circumstances.

Expectations should be clear to all adults and there should be **no smoking, drinking alcohol, making personal mobile phone calls or swearing** near pupils.

Parents and other responsible adults may be used to supplement staffing ratios. They should be carefully selected and ideally, known to the school. Parents and carers are **not allowed** to bring babies, toddlers or other children with them on the trip.

Volunteers must have an up-to-date DBS check, under the following circumstances:

- if they work regularly as a volunteer
- if they assist on a residential visit
- if they supervise on a one-to one basis with a young person

Supervision Ratios

Pupil to staff ratios for school trips are not prescribed in law (apart from children in EYFS). When planning trips and deciding the ratios, we take into account the activity to be undertaken and the age and maturity of the pupils along with the experience and competence of the staff involved.

In line with the most recent government guidance on staffing ratios our **minimum ratios** are:

Nursery and Reception	=	1 adult to 4 children
Years 1 to 3	=	1 adult to 6 children
Years 4, 5 and 6	=	1 adult to 10-15 children

Planning and Documentation

Where possible, visits should be planned at the beginning of the academic year, although it is recognised that valuable opportunities might arise throughout the year that does not always make this possible. Teachers at Heavers Farm Primary School should plan trips with year group partners. All classes within a year group should attend the same venue unless there are exceptional circumstances.

The class teachers are the Group Leaders and have full responsibility for organising the visit.

The **Planning List for Trip Leaders** should be completed and attached to the completed risk assessments and be given to the Headteacher **at least one week before the date of the trip**. No trip should take place until the relevant documentation has been completed and given to the Headteacher.

On planning a visit teachers must be clear on the educational purpose of the visit and ensure it is relevant to the curriculum. If public transport is being used teachers should visit the venue using the same transport required for the pupils.

Often venues supply task sheets that focus pupils learning. However, these must be appropriate and enrich the experience. Clipboards and pencils are necessary when pupils are required to make notes. It is often more beneficial to provide information and questions prior to the visit with feedback sessions at a later date.

HEAD COUNTS

Head counts should take place **regularly** and particularly when leaving a venue.

The group leader should carry a list of all the children and adults involved in the visit at all times.

Children **should not** wear name badges, although wrist bands identifying the school and the emergency contact number may be useful alternative particularly for our youngest pupils.

The group leader should establish meeting points and explain to the young people what they should do if they become separated from the group.

ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

The group leader would normally take charge in an emergency, but back up cover must be arranged. Supervisors, parents and the pupils should be aware of who will take charge in an emergency and what they are expected to do.

In the event of an accident or emergency the Group Leader should:

- note the time of the incident
- keep a written record of events
- retain all equipment in an unaltered condition, preserve any vital evidence
- contact school immediately and speak to the headteacher or a senior member of staff

The Group Leader should obtain the following information.

- What happened to whom or what?
- The nature of the injuries or damage?
- Treatment given or action taken?
- When the incident occurred and where the group is now?
- Who was at the incident and who is with the injured people?
- How the incident happened?

It is important that the Group Leader:

- establishes the extent and nature of the incident quickly
- ensures the rest of the group is safe and is looked after
- establishes the names of casualties and medical attention is provided quickly
- calls the emergency services if required (ambulance, police, coastguard, fire service)
- assesses whether to halt activities and remove all participants to a place of safety
- appoints a member of staff to accompany the injured to hospital
- inform the home contact with the following information:
 - nature, date and time of incident
 - location of incident
 - names of casualties and details of their injuries
 - names of others involved so parents can be reassured
 - action taken so far
 - action yet to be taken and by whom
- refer any external agencies to Croydon's Press Office
- if necessary, inform the insurers particularly if medical assistance is required
- if necessary, inform the provider
- complete an accident form as soon as possible
- write down accurately and as soon as possible all relevant facts and witness details
- no-one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties

No-one in the group must speak to the media; names must not be divulged to the media, refer the media to the Press Office.

HEALTH CARE ADVICE FOR FARM VISITS

Advice issued by Professor Donaldson (Chief Medical Officer) about young children visiting farms to reduce the risk of E.coli 0157 infection being contracted from the animals (1999).

Children should enjoy their farm visit and will avoid infection by taking the following precautions:

- Washing and drying their hands thoroughly after touching an animal.
- Not eating or drinking anything at all whilst going round the farm, and only eating when well away from the animals, after thoroughly washing their hands.
- Not putting their faces against an animal and not putting hands in their own mouths after touching an animal.
- Not touching animal droppings, but washing and drying their hands immediately if they do.
- Cleaning their shoes when they leave the farm, or when they get home or back to school, and then washing their hands thoroughly.

ROLE OF HOME CONTACT (for Residential Visits)

Each visit, however short, must have a named home-based contact who will be available to receive messages and provide assistance, if required, for the duration of the visit. Their role is to act as a link between the group leader, the parents, the LA and or the governing body. The address and telephone number of this person should be contained in the written information for parents and on the nominal role sent to the LA with Form EV3. They must have immediate access to the contact details of all those on the visit including staff and volunteers and to the itinerary of the visit. This applies to visits within and out of school hours in case of:

- a change of travel arrangements at short notice
- delays relating to return times
- any emergency or accident

The home contact person also acts as 'check in' at times agreed by the group leader, and at the end of the visit. If it is a residential visit they should be notified as soon as the group arrives and report any incidents that may occur during the visit. If there is an emergency the home contact should:

- ensure that the group leader is in control of the situation and establish if assistance is required from the home base
- contact the parents, the parents should be kept as well informed as possible at all stages of the emergency
- liaise with the LA and or the governing body and arrange for any assistance if required
- liaise with the media contact
- report the incident using the appropriate forms

The group leader should keep the home contact number with them at all times.

CONTACT WITH PARENTS (Residential Trips)

Residential visits: group leaders should arrange for parents to be told of the group's safe arrival. Parent – young person contact during the visit is entirely at the school's discretion.

APPENDIX 1

Planning List for Trip Leaders (to be completed and returned to Headteacher at least 1 week before the date of the trip)

Year Group:			
Date of Visit:		Time of Trip:	
Purpose of the Visit: For children to experience the beach environment.			
Trip Leader:			
Have you visited the venue?			
Please attach correct risk assessments to be signed by the Headteacher			
General		Travel	Specific
Have parents/carers been notified? (Attach copy of letter)			
Have I requested medical kits?			
What is your mobile phone number?			
Have ALL STAFF in your year group been briefed about the trip at a school trip planning meeting? Date of trip planning meeting:			
Have packed lunches been ordered for children eligible for free school meals?			
Have the kitchen been informed?			
Where will children eat at the venue?			
At the venue who will lead the group?			
Has money been collected? Total collected to date £			
Have you checked the records to ensure that all parents/carers have given written permission?			
Please list the adults accompanying you on this trip.			
Detail the provision that has been made for children with special needs? Continue overleaf if necessary.			