



BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL

Educational Visits Policy

Policy

Berkhampstead is strongly committed to learning outside of the classroom walls. We believe that the value added of these activities far exceeds the inherent risks. Thus, safely managed educational visits with a clear purpose are an indispensable part of the broad and balanced curriculum we offer.

Throughout the school year, staff at Berkhampstead undertake numerous activities that occur away from the school site, often beyond school hours. The organisation of all educational visits follows current best practice guidance as described in the DfES booklet Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits (2001).

It is important that a balance is struck between subjects, year groups and terms for such visits. A grid is used to monitor when such trips occur throughout the year.

Purpose

It is important that any educational visit, or overseas trip, is carried out in a calm, happy and secure environment, and that staff and children feel confident in the safety procedures in place and that they fully understand the parameters of the trip. The learning experience, however, must remain the primary focus.

The aims and objectives of educational visits and of learning across and beyond the curriculum are:

- A. Developing key skills
 - a. Using and applying knowledge, skills and understanding in different, realistic and exciting contexts.
 - b. Developing the ability to work co-operatively.
 - c. Developing the ability to communicate successfully.
 - d. Showing initiative and a positive attitude.
 - e. Showing greater independence, moving towards self-reliance.

- f. Becoming increasingly risk aware and increasing understanding and independent action.
- B. Raising achievement by boosting self-esteem and motivation
- a. Raising self-esteem through successful participation and enjoyment.
 - b. Developing a positive attitude to learning.
 - c. Helping demonstrate strengths and understanding of limitations.
 - d. Encouraging responsibility.
 - e. Improving behaviour.
 - f. Addressing disaffection.
- C. Developing social education and citizenship
- a. The ability to work with others, accept and support them, building relationships.
 - b. Learning to tolerate others and respect their views – understanding equal opportunities.
 - c. Learning to accept the consequences of their own actions.
 - d. Learning to defend their own point of view.
 - e. Encouraging a commitment to voluntary service.
 - f. Exploring attitudes and values they will carry into adult life.
- D. Promoting education for sustainable development
- a. An appreciation of the natural world as a source of interest and challenge.
 - b. A concern for living things.
 - c. An understanding of the need for interdependence between people and the environment.
 - d. Recognition of the effect of present actions on the future.
 - e. An increasing ability to access evidence and make personal decisions.
- E. Promoting health and fitness and a positive use of leisure
- a. Developing a positive attitude to physical activities and a healthy lifestyle.
 - b. Developing and experiencing physical fitness and well-being.
 - c. Achieving success in physical activities.
 - d. Developing self-respect and self-discipline and the ability to cope with adversity.

At any time pupils are 'off-site', they are considered to be on a school trip or educational visit. This involves activities such as: fixtures, visits to museums, extracurricular activities (skiing, golf etc), local community work (visits to residential/care homes), residential trips, sports tours etc.

Equal opportunities and inclusion

Everyone concerned needs to ensure that every effort is made to include all children. The challenge is to make these activities available and accessible in some form to all who wish to participate or are required to take part. This would be irrespective of their special educational or medical need, disability, ethnic origin, sex or religion.

It needs to be remembered that this must be done whilst maintaining the safety of all those concerned, the integrity of the activity and the ability to manage the visit or venture. These are significant factors to be managed, which may over-ride other considerations. Communication with parents is key to decisions being made.

Approval procedure

The procedure for planning and booking a trip can be found as an Educational Visit Procedure Pack which is available in the Office. This will be followed.

Individual responsibilities for visits

The Head

This is the key role for ensuring that the management of visits and trips meets the regulations and conforms to the school's Health and Safety and Safeguarding Policies. Any delegation of responsibilities must be done with a clear rationale, derived from a good knowledge of the people concerned; the visits and activities; the aims and objectives; and the risk assessments required.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)

As EVC, the Head may delegate some of his duties to a designated member of the Senior Management Team.

The Group Leader

This is the person with overall responsibility for the administration, programme, supervision and conduct of the venture. They are therefore an important part of the health and safety and good practice support system, and should both understand their own responsibilities and those of the other people in the process who contribute to their support, success and confidence.

The Group Leader has full responsibility for the safe running of the activity including pre-planning and following guidance, and ensuring all participants are aware of their roles. To achieve this, the Group Leader will:

- Identify the clear purpose and objectives of the visit
- Complete visit documentation, and obtain approval from the Head for any visit off-site, no matter how short its duration
- Have prior knowledge of the venue – the trip leader should normally have made an exploratory pre-visit
- Carry out, and provide a written record of, a comprehensive risk assessment
- Ensure that all proper means of transport have been catered for
- Check that the nature of the activity falls within the scope of the school's insurance; if not, plan as necessary for an appropriate level of insurance cover
- Inform parents and seek permission/consent, detailing the nature, purpose and related activities involved in the visit

- Arrange briefing meetings with parents, as appropriate, for high risk, residential and foreign visits
- Liaise with the office to ensure that any specific medical or health issues of pupils or accompanying staff are taken into consideration within the planning and that their needs are catered for
- Allocate supervisory responsibility to each adult for named pupils and ensure that each adult knows which pupils they are responsible for, and to ensure that each pupil knows which adult is responsible for them
- Continuously monitor the appropriateness of the activity
- Carry out a review of the trip on return, evaluating its success and recording any near-misses or proposed changes for repeat trips in the future – this should be shared with the Head.

The Head (or designated member of the SMT) is responsible for approving all visits or ventures that take place. Before approval is given, the Group Leader gains information from the Centres/Providers of the activities to ensure that health and safety, risk assessment and operating procedures are in place. Centres/Providers will be checked for their appropriateness, their leader's qualifications and basic operating procedures. These checks will be carried out annually where repeat visits are planned.

Members of the group with specific responsibilities

These people will assist the Group Leader in all their tasks and activities and will need to demonstrate person specific, pastoral, technical and management expertise. The list of responsibilities and competencies for the members of the group will need to be supplemented according to circumstances.

Responsibilities of the children

As school trips and visits are an extension of the curriculum, Berkhamstead expects its pupils to adhere to the principles stated in the Behaviour Policy. Whilst we acknowledge that enjoyment is a fundamental ingredient of any visit or trip, pupil safety is paramount.

- It is essential that all groups are made as aware and active in the process of managing the visit or trip as they can be.
- Procedures, group and supervision strategies must be explained and understood.
- Individual and group responsibilities need to be clear, as well as the rewards and sanctions for ensuring they are kept to.
- A Code of Conduct, negotiated and agreed in an acceptable way, is a key component of educational visits e.g. communication, behaviour, dress, group supervision and “down time”.
- It may be necessary to have individual behaviour contracts with some young people, signed by themselves and their parents.
- Everyone should be as risk aware as is realistic.

Any children whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from going on the visit. The curricular aims of the visit for these pupils should be fulfilled in other ways wherever possible.

Staffing supervision

Berkhampstead recognises that accompanying staff possess a key role in ensuring the high standards of learning, challenge and safety on a school trip. The levels of supervision will determine not only the health and safety of the children and their leaders, but also the quality of the overall experience, enabling learning to take place as well as allowing all those concerned to enjoy the experience and derive satisfaction from it. Supervision is a key element in the success of any venture.

To this end, an appropriate staff/pupil ratio will be observed, and this is determined by the risk assessment carried out by the Group Leader. The minimum ratios are those considered best practice as described in the DfES Statutory Framework for EYFS March 2017.

School trips insurance

The School Trips Insurance Policy automatically covers children taking part in school trips. Travel insurance is normally only required for trips abroad. The Schools insurance must be checked to ensure cover is in place if the trip involves any potentially hazardous activities. The School carries public liability insurance, which covers trips to all UK venues. In the event of a trip being action-related, additional medical cover may be needed.

Risk assessment and risk management requirements

Risk assessment and risk management are legal requirements. It also needs to be acknowledged that the process represents and promotes good practice.

“Working in the outdoors” encompasses many activities, from using the local environment as an ‘outdoor classroom’ through to taking part in recognised ‘hazardous’ activities. What they all have in common is to use an exciting and stimulating environment to promote learning and personal development. However, if personal development and increasing self-reliance are to be achieved, then we must properly assess, prepare for and manage any significant hazards in these environments and the risks they present.

The process of risk assessment involves the Group Leader and the team in:-

- Looking for and at the hazards involved.
- Identifying and assessing the risks.
- Deciding what control measures need to be put in place to eliminate or minimise the risk.
- Recording the findings.

The risk assessments are carried out before, during and after the visit as part of the evaluation to ensure that the assessment is still relevant. A copy of this documentation is kept by the school office.

Communicating with parents or persons with parental responsibility

Communication with parents will be clear, as full as required and interactive, so that questions can be asked and queries answered. Parents' consent to a visit or trip should be based on a good understanding of the purposes, nature and programme for a visit or trip. Parents should be kept informed of any off-site activity (simply defined as outside the school or school gates).

Safeguarding children

All children have the right to be protected from harm. An educational visit, off-site and residential activities, provide a stimulating learning, environmental and, in many cases, a different and more relaxed or interactive environment.

The School is committed to ensuring that:-

- Safeguarding Children procedures are initiated
- Ensuring clear lines of communication and effective liaison between staff managing and supervising this work.
- Ensuring clear lines of communication and effective liaison between all agencies responsible for the safety and welfare of children.
- Enabling children to understand their rights and recognise and deal with unsafe situations.
- Implementing the Berkhamstead School's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

First Aid

The School's Health and Safety Policy ensures that, as far as possible, the school buildings are an accident-free environment. The same standards apply to off-site, including all forms of visits and trips.

- The provision of a first-aider does not prevent accidents, but it is an important part of the control measures that follow risk assessment.
- The School provides adequate and appropriate equipment, facilities and personnel at its locations to enable employees, pupils and visitors to be given first aid.
- Decisions about the deployment of first aiders on visits and trips are based on risk assessments, which consider:
 - The hazards in any environment and the risks they present.
 - Any generic policies in place.
 - The group and its needs (including medical).
 - The leaders and activities to be undertaken.
 - The transport arrangements.
 - The remoteness of any location and the ability to summon support.

- What first aid qualifications and experience are available at the trips provider's locations/centres.
- The history of any incidents or accidents in similar contexts.

Cover is proportional to the risk, rather than to group numbers or similar criteria.

Recording and reporting incidents and accidents

Accidents to children, leaders and volunteers will be recorded or reported in accordance with the established procedures. All accidents and emergencies will be recorded, no matter how minor. In the case of a serious injury, the parents and the Head will be informed as soon as possible. (See Critical Incident Policy)

Transport

Transport arrangements are an essential part of school visits or trips. The School's own school minibuses and list of approved coach companies provide most of the local off-site road transport services. Where off-site visits and ventures involve long distance travel by road, it may be necessary for the Group Leader to contact other coach companies or other travel providers.

Safety and emergency procedures

Trip organisers have an implicit 'duty of care' and must take prudent and reasonable steps to ensure the safety and welfare of all those involved.

Whilst a trip or visit is in progress, the Head acts as the emergency school contact.

Any major incident will immediately be related to him especially if injury is involved.

The Group Leader will take full details of all pupils in addition to the contact number of the Head and the School Office. For any overnight or overseas visits, this precaution is strengthened with the addition of full contact details for each pupil's parents or guardians.

Each Group Leader will ensure that at the very least the school mobile is taken, or that the Head/EVC and School Office have at least one mobile contact number.

All staff possess a First Aid Certificate. First Aid kits are mandatory on any trip and it is the responsibility of the Group Leader to organise this. In the case of emergency medical treatment being required, the Group Leader will make direct contact with the parents. If this situation occurs abroad, then the trip leader acts in loco parentis (as stated on the Medical Form), but parents are contacted as soon as is feasible.

For EYFS trips, at least one member of staff has a Paediatric First Aid Certificate.

Evaluation

The Group Leader evaluates all visits and trips and a short evaluation report is given to the Head.

The office holds all trip records, including evaluation forms, for the duration of the current academic year.

Where additional costs have been incurred unexpectedly, a full financial report should be given to the Bursar upon return.