

SECTION A

Educational Visits and Outdoor Activities Policy & Procedures City of York Council LEA



Learning Culture and Children's Services

Educational Visits & Outdoor Activities Policy & Procedures

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POLICY

Statement

In its role of employer, the City of York Council through the Local Education Authority (LEA) will, as much as it is reasonably practicable, undertake to ensure it fulfils all the statutory health and safety obligations it has responsibilities for with regard to Educational Visits and Outdoor Activities across the network of the directorate.

In schools where the City of York Council is not the employer, i.e. Voluntary Aided, Foundation and Independent schools, the LEA policy, procedures and guidelines may be followed as best practice by the employers of those establishments. The employers may, if they wish, adopt this policy and these procedures.

This will include to provide all employees associated with educational visits and outdoor activities in schools and education/leisure departments with:-

- Professional advice for health and safety on educational visits
- Detailed policy and procedures
- Accurate and detailed information
- Operational guidelines
- Procurement and provision of training
- Emergency procedures
- Monitoring and approval of planned educational visits where necessary

As part of best practice, the LEA will also share this policy and procedures and make it available to other schools and agencies where it has no legal responsibility as the employer for health and safety.

1.0 Background

In the past few years the profile of safety on educational visits has been raised in view of the number of fatalities to young children there has been whilst participating on an educational visit.

Subsequent legal cases following these fatalities have established and clarified the shared responsibility between schools/departments and LEAs.

The DfES have taken an initiative in developing further guidance for educational visits and providing extra funding for LEAs to implement recommendations made in this guidance. One part of this guidance is that LEAs should engage the services of an Educational Visits Adviser which the LEA in York has done.

Following this guidance there is a need for LEAs to establish local policy and procedures to suit their own local needs. This must be supported with guidance and professional advice on health and safety for educational visits which complies with current legislative requirements.

2.0 Principles

The goal for the LEA is to encourage the continuation of educational visits and outdoor activities and to ensure that they are organised, lead and run in the safest possible way.

This is based on the following key principles:

- A belief in the educational value of educational visits both in enhancing the curriculum and providing young people with the opportunity to learn which cannot be replicated in the classroom, and further provide opportunities for the development of our pupils.
- The need to establish a framework of policy, procedure, guidance and support that provides sufficient reassurance for governors, teachers, parents and the young people themselves. It must also ensure that educational visits continue safely and can be offered as a regular part of the provision for young people in schools and other services.
- Educational visits should be organised, led and run in the safest possible way, and Health and Safety considerations must always be given the highest priority.
- In planning educational visits and outdoor activities schools and service areas will have regard to the individual needs and circumstances of all children.
- All educational visits and off site activities should be planned with educational outcomes as the main principle objective.
- Children should experience risk in a controlled and safe manner and be encouraged to participate in evaluating risk as part of their learning.

- All staff involved with educational visits should receive the correct level of training, information and guidance to enrich their competence, and have access to continuing professional development.

3.0 Responsibilities

Clear defined roles and responsibilities are given in the DfES guidelines (Standards for LEAs) for LEAs, Governors, Headteachers, Educational Visits Advisers and Educational Visits Coordinators. This local policy endorses the guidelines and in addition sets out that:

3.1 The LEA will:

- Provide robust and comprehensive policy, procedures and guidance for all concerned and ensure that they are regularly up-dated.
- Support schools and other departments with an educational visits advisory service.
- Will maintain a working group, made up of EVC's and the EVA to further develop, revise and review the Educational Visits Policy and Procedures.
- Work in partnership with schools and other agencies who organise educational visits.
- Procure, provide and advise on educational visits training and instruction for all staff involved with educational visits.
- Ensure that a system is in place for both the approval and notification of visits where it is necessary.
- Monitor the way in which the policy and procedures are used in schools and other services in the management of educational visits
- Maintain an emergency procedure for all Educational Visits and Outdoor Activities.
- Investigate accidents and incidents when it is necessary

3.2 The governing body must:

- Ensure that a person in the school has the role of Educational Visits Coordinator (if there is no other nomination this will be the Head).
- Adopt and endorse the policy and procedure of the LEA or provide an acceptable alternative which meets all the statutory requirements.
- Ascertain the need and relevance of governor training for educational visits.

- Agree on a protocol for authorising educational visits (see table below).

3.3 The Headteacher must:

- Recommend to the governing body a nominated Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC). If a school or department has not provided a named person then it will be assumed that the EVC is the head teacher or department manager.
- Ensure that arrangements are in place for the governing body to be made aware of visits to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities.
- Consult with the EVC on the arrangements in place for carrying out adequate risk assessments for visits.
- To ensure (with the EVC) that leaders of visits are competent to lead, evaluated on the type of visit in question.
- Allocate sufficient resources to meet identified training needs for staff (and volunteers).
- Ensure that there is co-operation from all concerned to enable others to fulfil their roles and responsibilities.
- Ensure that visits arranged are of educational value and meet the planned objectives.

3.4 The Educational Visits Co-ordinator

should ensure that:

- The group leader is competent to lead the group on the activity planned.
- The policy and procedures have been followed by the group leader.
- All significant risks have been assessed, recorded and appropriate safety control measures are in place.
- The correct authorisation is sought and granted for each visit.
- The visits that should be notified to the LEA are notified within the correct time scale.
- Review training needs for the school/department, taking account of the evidence from appraisal, job specific requirements, risk assessments legislative requirements and proactive/reactive monitoring to recommend a programme of training, tailored to meet the needs of the school.

4.0 Summary of key procedural requirements

- 4.1 In implementing the procedures for the Educational Visits Policy, the LEA will follow as reasonably as practicable the guidance quoted in the Standards for LEAs in Overseeing Educational Visits.
- 4.2 In support of the policy a manual will be produced which will include the policy and relevant procedures, which will continue to be developed. This will be updated as and when necessary.
- 4.3 The procedure for the notification and approval of visits has been implemented and the outline for this is detailed below. The notification procedure and the procedure guidance should be referenced when planning all educational visits and outdoor activities. Where the EVA has concerns regarding any notification they will contact the school or service as set out in the notification procedure.
- 4.4 Categories of visits and levels of notification for approval

Cat	Categories of visits	HT	EVC	GOV's	LEA
1	Local EV which is walking distance from the school with all risks controlled. Not involving any open water.	X	X		
2	Regular (weekly/termly) EV's involving transport to the venue i.e. swimming, football, netball etc.	X	X	X	
3	Individual EV's of a specific nature but not residential and does not involve open water.	X	X	X	
4	Individual EV's of a specific nature (as above) which include an activity in open water or are of a type which fall under the Adventure Activities Regulations.	X	X	X	X
5	All residential visits in the UK and abroad and those which fall under the Adventure Activity Regulations.	X	X	X	X

N.B.

Categories 1&2 may only need governor approval on a termly or yearly basis. Cat. 3,4 & 5 will need approval on an individual basis. If any category involves being on or in open water then this must be notified to the EVA

Under Cat.5, Adventure activities are further defined under separate categories as detailed in the Adventure Activity Licensing Regulations 1996 & DfES guidance "Standards For Adventure". Leaders of adventure activities visits must be fully conversant and competent in the category of activity they are leading. All category 4 &5 visits must be notified to the EVA at the LEA

5.0 Support

5.1 The Education and Leisure Directorate has appointed an Educational Visits Adviser whose role includes support in:

- Assessing the notification of prescribed visits(see notification of visits).
- Monitoring visits, ensuring their compliance with the H&S policy and procedures for educational visits.
- Giving advice and guidance where needed.
- Maintaining the database of schools and information on visits for other schools to use.
- Maintaining procedures to monitor and review safety in off-site activities.
- Providing and procuring training for staff involved in educational visits.

5.2 Further support will be provided by the Education and Leisure H&S Advisers and from the respective Educational Advisers

6.0. Legislative background

6.1 The policy encompasses all aspects of The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 which requires all employees, including volunteers, to:

- Take reasonable care of their own and others' safety.
- Co-operate with the employer over safety matters.
- Carry out activities in accordance with training and instruction.
- Inform the Head teacher, manager, Educational Visits Co-ordinator or group leader of any serious risks.

The policy also recognises requirements found in other legislation including the Education Act 2002, The Schools Standard Framework Act 1998, The Education Act 1996 and the Schools Inspections Act 1996.

Within the above legislation it is incumbent upon teachers, staff and volunteers to show a high degree of 'duty of care' when in the company of and supervising children.

It will be expected that all those involved in the coordination, approval, planning, and leadership of educational visits will follow the policy and procedures as issued by the LEA and the guidance issued by the Department for Education and Skills.

The LEA will undertake to follow the guidance issued by the Department of Education and Skills on Educational Visits. Schools and departments should also undertake to follow this guidance. The guidance (which may be amended from time to time by the DfES) includes:

- **Health and Safety : Responsibilities and Powers (DfES/0803/2001).** Detailed guidance which seeks to clarify responsibilities under Health and Safety legislation within the local management of schools and fair funding.
- **Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits (HASPEV), a good practice Guide.** Advice on organising educational visits.
- **Standards For LEAs in Overseeing Educational Visits.** A good practice guide for LEAs in overseeing educational visits carried out by schools, youth services and other departments.
- **Standards for Adventure.** Is aimed at the teacher, youth worker or other person who leads young people on adventure activities. Activities which would normally come under the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996.
- **A Handbook for Group Leaders.** Is aimed at anyone who leads groups of young people on any kind of educational visit . It sets out good practice in supervision, ongoing risk assessments and emergency procedures.
- **Group Safety at Water Margins.** Good practice guidance for activities involving all types of water.

7.0 Key Contacts

SEE APPENDIX 1 SECTION 2

8. Educational Visits Procedures

Index of educational visits procedures

1. Section 1 Code of Practice
2. Guidance
3. Forms and Checklists
4. Risk Assessment (Introduction)
5. Generic Risk Assessments
6. Specific Risk Assessments
7. Adventurous Activities
8. Transport
9. Competency and Training
10. Guidance and Best Practice Documents (1-10)

Executive Summary

This document provides detailed information on the organisation and running of school educational visits. The handbook covers all aspects including the responsibilities of the Group Leader, EVC, Head Teacher, Governing body and the LEA in planning, authorising and monitoring all educational visits. There is information on planning, risk assessments, first aid, transport as well as useful addresses and contacts if further help is needed.

All relevant DfES documentation is included such as Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits, the three supplements (Parts 1,2 and 3), First Aid in Schools, Responsibilities and Powers, Disabled Discrimination etc.

The procedures contained in the Handbook formalise the process that all schools must undergo when organising educational visits.

The Policy sets out Responsibilities, in brief;

The **LEA** is responsible for:

- ensuring all schools are following the policy laid down in the Handbook;
- offering advice and guidance where it is required;
- ensuring schools are up to date with the latest advice and guidance.

The **Governing Body** is responsible for:

- drawing up and implementing a school Visits Policy in line with LEA policy;
- for ensuring the visits meet all requirements in the policy and the LEA's Code of Practice;
- ensuring all visits have sound aims and objectives.

The **Head Teacher** must:

- ensure that all school visits follow the Code of Practice as laid out in this document.
- ensure the competency of the Educational Visits Co-ordinator and Group Leaders,
- that all procedures are followed including the notification of the LEA where necessary.

All schools in York should have a named **Educational Visits Co-ordinator** (EVC) who is responsible to the head teacher (in many schools the head teacher and the EVC are the same). In those schools that have not named an EVC it will be assumed the head teacher has taken on the role.

The EVC's role is:

- ensuring all visits follow the LEA's Code of Practice;
- liaise with the LEA's Outdoor Education Officer on any queries;
- Ensure risk assessments are carried out and keep a record of all school visits along with all relevant paperwork for further reference;

- ensure the competence of group leader.

A Flow Chart of Roles and Responsibilities

