



The
Swinton High School
A Converter Academy

Educational Visits Policy

October 2015

Rationale

Well planned and executed educational visits provide our pupils with valuable experiences which enhance their learning at school. Providing a variety of 'real-life' opportunities for our children enables them to achieve a fuller understanding of the world around them through direct experience. Educational visits are an essential element of good school practice.

Purposes

Educational Visits can provide stimulus and support to work being covered as part of the school curriculum. It may be that a visit provides an effective stimulus at the start of a unit of work; alternatively teachers may decide to use an educational visit at any time during a project to enhance and support the curriculum. Wherever or whatever the venue, teachers should ensure that the educational benefits to the children are maximised.

Key personnel

Key personnel within the school are:

Karen Swindells – Educational visits support

Ian Rowlinson – EVC (Educational Visits Co-ordinator)

Outside the school:

Simon Willis – Salford Educational Advisor

Guidelines

The organisation of an educational visit is crucial to its success. With rigorous organisation and control, a visit should provide a rich, learning experience for the pupils.

The following guidelines support the planning and implementation of educational visits organised at The Swinton High School.

Educational Visits Co-ordinator

The EVC will endeavour to ensure that:

- They have appointed a suitable group leader.
- All necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins.
- The risk assessment is complete and that it is safe to make the visit.
- Training needs have been met.
- The group leader has experience in supervising and controlling the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively.
- The group leader has relevant skills, qualifications and experience if acting as an instructor, and knows the location of the activity.
- All supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise children and have appropriate clearance.
- The governing body (or delegate) has approved the visit if necessary, this is applicable to all residential visits.

Group Leader

One member of staff, the group leader, is responsible overall for the supervision and conduct of the visit, and should have been appointed by the Headteacher. The Group Leader should:

- Appoint a deputy.
- Be able to control and lead pupils of the relevant age range.
- Be suitably qualified if instructing an activity and be conversant in the good practice for that activity if not.
- Undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members and parents.
- Undertake and complete a comprehensive risk assessment.
- Have regard to the health and safety of the group at all times.
- Know all the pupils proposed for the visit to assess their suitability.
- Observe the guidance set out for teachers and other adults below.
- Ensure that pupils understand their responsibilities (see responsibilities of pupils below).
- Ensure that the visit has been authorised by the appropriate body which may include the Headteacher, EVC, Chair of Governors. This should be done via the online EVOLVE system.

Other teachers and adults involved in a visit

Teachers on school-led visits act as employees of the Governing Body. They will therefore be acting in the course of their normal employment during their normal hours. They will be acting under an agreement with their Headteacher and Governors if some of their time on the visit falls outside normal hours.

Teacher and other adults on the visit must:

- Do their utmost to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group.
- Care for each individual pupil as any reasonable parent would.
- Follow the instructions of the leader and help with control and discipline.
- Consider stopping the visit or the activity if they think the risk to the health or safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable.

Responsibilities of pupils

The group leader should make it clear to pupils that they must:

- Not take unnecessary risks.
- Follow the instructions of the leader and other adults.
- Dress and behave sensibly and responsibly.
- Look out for anything that might hurt or threaten anyone in the group and tell the group leader about it.
- Should not undertake any task that they fear or that they think will be dangerous.

Any pupils whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from going on the visit. The safety of all members of the school is a priority. The curricular aims of the visit for these pupils should be fulfilled in other ways.

Parents

The group leader should ensure that parents are given information about the purpose and details of the visit and are invited to any briefing sessions for longer visits.

The group leader should also tell parents how they can help prepare their child for the visit by, for example, reinforcing the visit's code of conduct.

Special arrangements may be necessary for parents for whom English is a second language;

Parents must:

- Provide the group leader with emergency contact number(s).
- Sign the relevant consent forms.
- Give the group leader relevant information about their child's health which might be relevant to the visit.

Planning off-site visits

Whether the visit is to a local park, museum, swimming pool, or includes a residential stay, it is essential that careful planning takes place. This involves considering the dangers and difficulties which may arise and making plans to avoid them.

The Headteacher is responsible for planning all off-site visits. In practice, the detailed planning is delegated to the organiser of the visit or the group leader, but the Headteacher must be satisfied that the person planning the visit is qualified to do so and has the necessary experience. The Educational Visits Coordinator is available to liaise with and support the planning of visits

The organiser / group leader must agree all plans with the Headteacher.

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment should always be carried out whilst planning an educational visit. Generic Risk Assessments are available on the Salford Intranet but these should be changed in order to ensure that they are appropriate for the visit. The risk assessment will decide the adult:child ratio for each visit. (See Guidance under 'Supervision'). The risk assessment should include the following considerations:

- What are the risks?
- Who is affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader guarantee that these safety measures will be provided?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?
- What is the acceptable ratio of adults to children for this visit? (See section on Supervision.)

The group leader and other supervisors should continually reassess the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action if pupils are in danger.

The group leader should take the following factors into consideration when assessing the risks:

- The type of activity and the level at which it is being undertaken.
- The location.
- The competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff.
- The group members' age, competence, fitness and temperament.
- Pupils with special educational or medical needs.
- The quality and suitability of available equipment.
- Seasonal conditions, weather and timing.

Exploratory visit

Wherever possible the group leader should undertake an exploratory visit to:

- Ensure that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit.
- Assess potential areas and levels of risk.
- Ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and pupils in the group.
- Ensure that the group leader is familiar with the area before taking a party of young people.

If it is not feasible to carry out an exploratory visit, a minimum measure should be to contact the venue, seeking assurances about the venue's appropriateness for the visiting group. In addition, it may be worth seeking views from other schools who have recently visited the venue. In some cases, such as when taking walking parties to remote areas, it may be appropriate to obtain local information from the Tourist Boards.

First Aid

First Aid provision should be considered when assessing the risks of the visit. For adventurous activities, visits which involve overnight stays, or visits abroad it is sensible to have at least one trained first-aid trained member of staff in the group. The group leader should have a clear understanding of how to access first aid and all adults in the group should know how to contact emergency services.

The minimum first-aid provision is:

- a suitably stocked first-aid box;
- a person appointed to be in charge of first-aid arrangements.

First-aid should be available and accessible at all times. The group leader should take this into account when assessing what level of first-aid facilities will be needed. The contents of a first-aid kit will depend on what activities are planned.

Supervision

It is important to have a sufficient ratio of adult supervisors to pupils for any off-site visit. The factors to take into consideration include:

- Sex, age and ability of group.
- Special needs pupils.

- Nature of activities.
- Experience of adults in off site supervision.
- Duration and nature of the journey.
- Type of any accommodation.
- Competence of staff, both general and on specific activities.

There should always be enough supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency. When visits are to remote areas or involved hazardous activities, the risks may be greater and supervision levels should be set accordingly.

As general guidelines, the following minimum ratio of adults to children should be used:

Low risk local visits on foot: 1:20

Low risk local visits by coach/minibus: 1:18

Medium risk visits/ low risk visits which are not local: 1:15

High risk visits/ medium risk visits which are not local: 1:10

Regardless of these suggested ratios, each visit will be assessed individually through the school's risk assessment procedure for educational visits.

These ratios do not include residential visits.

At The Swinton High School wherever possible the ratio should include an extra member of staff in case of illness or accidents.

Where there is more than one adult supervisor a group leader, who has authority over the whole party, should be appointed.

All adult supervisors must understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. In particular, all supervisors should be aware of any pupils who may require closer supervision, such as those with special needs or those with behavioural difficulties. The group leader retains responsibility for the group at all times.

If the school is leading an adventure activity, such as canoeing, the LEA or Governing Body must ensure that the group leader and other supervisors are suitably qualified to lead and instruct the activity before they agree that the visit can take place. Qualifications can be checked with the National Governing Body of each sporting activity.

Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of pupils should take place. The group leader should establish rendezvous points and tell pupils what to do if they become separated from the party. A school mobile phone should be taken and the number issued to pupils.

Preparing Pupils

Providing information and guidance to pupils is an important part of preparing for a school visit. Pupils should have a clear understanding about what is expected of them and what the visit will entail. Pupils must understand what standard of behaviour is expected of them and why rules must be followed. The lack of control and discipline can be a major contributory factor when accidents occur. Pupils

should also be told about any potential dangers and how they should act to ensure their own and other's safety.

Pupils should be involved in planning, implementing and evaluating their own curricular work and have opportunities to take different roles within an activity. This could include considering any health and safety issues.

Participation

Pupils should be assessed to ensure that they are capable of undertaking the proposed activities. During the visit they should not be coerced into activities they fear.

Pupils whose behaviour is such that the group leader is concerned for their, or others' safety, should be withdrawn from the activity. On residential visits the group leader should consider whether such pupils will return home early.

Information to pupils

It is the responsibility of the group leader to decide how to provide information, but they should be satisfied that the pupils understand key safety information. Pupils should understand:

- The aims and objectives of the visit / activity.
- Background information about the place to be visited.
- How to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow rules.
- Why safety precautions are in place.
- Why special safety precautions are in place for anyone with disabilities.
- What standard of behaviour is expected from pupils.
- Who is responsible for the group.
- What to do if approached by a stranger.
- What to do if separated from the group.
- Emergency procedures.
- Rendezvous procedures.

Transport and pupils

Pupils using transport on a visit should be made aware of basic safety rules including:

- Arrive on time and wait for the transport away from the road, track, etc.
- Do not rush towards the transport when it arrives.
- Wear your seatbelt and stay seated while travelling on transport.
- Make sure your bags do not block aisles on the transport.
- Never attempt to get on or off the moving transport.
- Never throw things out of the transport vehicle's windows.
- Never get off a vehicle held up by traffic lights or in traffic.
- Never run about while transport is moving or pass someone on steps or stairs.
- Never kneel or stand on seats or otherwise impede the driver's vision.
- Never distract or disturb the driver.
- Stay clear of automatic doors / manual doors after boarding or leaving the transport.
- After leaving the vehicle, always wait for it to move off before crossing the road.
- If you have to cross roads to get to the transport always use the Green Cross Code.

- If you feel unwell while travelling, tell a teacher or the person who is otherwise responsible for the group.

Pupils with special educational and medical needs

The Headteacher will not exclude pupils with special educational or medical needs from school visits. Every effort should be made to accommodate them whilst maintaining the safety of everyone on the visit. Special attention should be given to appropriate supervision ratios and additional safety measures may need to be addressed at the planning stage.

Communicating with Parents / Guardians

Parents need to be aware that the teachers on the visit will be acting in their place – ‘in loco parentis’ – and will be exercising the same care that a prudent parent would. The following information on matters that might affect pupils’ health and safety is useful to parents, and will be included in letter to parents / guardians prior to a visit:

- Dates of the visit.
- Times of departure and return.
- Mode(s) of travel including the name of any travel company.
- Details of accommodation with security and supervisory arrangements on site.
- Names of leader, or other staff and of other accompanying adults.
- Visit’s objectives.
- Details of the activities planned and of how the assessed risks will be managed.
- Insurance taken out for the group as a whole in respect of luggage, accident, cancellation and medical cover. Any cover to be arranged by the parents, if appropriate, will be requested.
- Clothing and equipment to be taken.
- Money to be taken.
- The information to be given by parents and what they will be asked to consent to.

Parental consent

The Swinton School will seek consent for:

- All visits involving young children.
- Adventure activities.
- Visits abroad.
- Other residential visits.

An annual consent form is completed in order to authorise low risk visits and it is the responsibility of the group leader to ensure that any pupil attending the visit has returned to school a C2 consent form. It is the parent’s responsibility to inform the school of any changes to their personal circumstances including current medical issues.

Any reply slips that are brought into school should be taken on the visit and then returned to Mrs Swindells.

For any visit that is a medium/ high risk or residential visit a C2 form will be completed for that visit. This will then be returned after the visit to Mrs Swindells (EVC admin support).

If parents withhold consent absolutely the pupil should not be taken on the visit, but the curricular aims of the visit should be delivered to the pupil in some other way, wherever possible. If the parents give a conditional consent the Headteacher will need to consider whether the child may be taken on the visit or not. The School's parental consent form should be completed for each pupil in the group.

Residential visits

Hostels and Hotels

The school will bear in mind the following:

- The group leader should ideally have adjoining rooms with staff quarters next to the young people's – we will endeavour to obtain a floor plan of the rooms reserved for the group's use in advance.
- The immediate accommodation area should be exclusively for the use of the group.
- Access by staff to student rooms must be available at all times.
- Separate male and female sleeping areas for pupils and adults.
- Ensure that the whole party are aware of the lay-out of the accommodation, its fire precautions / exits, its regulations and routing, and that everyone can identify key personnel.
- Security arrangements – where the reception is not staffed 24 hours a day, security arrangements should be in force to stop unauthorised visitors.
- Ensure that locks / shutters etc. work on all the rooms used by the group.
- Storage of clothes, luggage, equipment etc., particularly safekeeping of valuables.
- Adequate lighting – it is advisable to bring a torch.
- Provision for sick, disabled pupils or those with special needs.
- Safety in rooms (electrical connections, secure balconies).
- Recreational accommodation / facilities for the group.

Coastal visits

Group leaders and other teachers should be aware that many of the incidents affecting school children have occurred by or in the sea. There are dangers on the coast quite apart from those incurred in swimming. The group leader should bear the following points in mind in the risk assessment of a coastal activity:

- Tides and sandbanks are potential hazards so timings and exit routes should be checked.
- Ensure group members are aware of warning signs and flags.
- Establish a base on the beach to which members of the group may return if separated.
- Look out for hazards such as glass, barbed wire and sewage outflows etc.
- Some of a group's time on a beach may be recreational. Group leaders should consider which areas of the terrain and sea are out of bounds.

- Cliff tops can be highly dangerous for school groups even during daylight. The group should keep to the path at all times. Group leaders should consider whether it is safe for pupils to ride mountain bikes on coastal paths.

Swimming

Swimming and paddling in the sea or other natural waters are potentially dangerous activities for a school group.

Swimming in the sea on a coastal visit should **not** be allowed. Paddling will only be allowed as part of a supervised activity, preferably in recognised bathing areas which have official surveillance. Pupils should always be in sight of their teachers. One teacher should always stay out of the water for better surveillance.

Where paddling is to be allowed on a visit, a ratio of 1 adult:4 children is a minimum.

Farm visits

The Swinton High School recognises that farms can be dangerous even for the people who work on them. Taking children to a farm will be very carefully planned, and the risks to be assessed should include those arising from the misuse of farm machinery and the hazards associated with E coli 0157 food poisoning and other infections.

The proposed farm will be checked to ensure that it is well managed, that it has a good reputation for safety standards and animal welfare and that it maintains good washing facilities and clean grounds and public areas. An exploratory visit should be carried out.

The basis rules for a farm visit will be:

We will never let pupils:

- Place their faces against the animals or their hands in their mouths after feeding them.
- Eat until they have washed their hands.
- Sample any animal foodstuffs.
- Drink from farm taps (other than in designated public facilities).
- Ride on tractors or other machines.
- Play in the farm area.

Using the EVOLVE system

All educational visits should be logged using the online EVOLVE system. This can be accessed as www.salfordlavisits.co.uk . The EVC will provide staff organising visits with a password and username. The visit request should be completed:

2 weeks prior to the visit if the visit is of low risk and does not require Local Authority approval

5 weeks prior to the visit if the visit is not low risk or is a residential visit that does require Local Authority approval. Residential visits also require approval from the chair of the governing body.

Once each section of the EVOLVE system is completed then the information should be submitted to the EVC for checking and authorisation.

The EVC is responsible for ensuring that the EVOLVE system is correctly completed. Once the EVC is satisfied that the EVOLVE form is completed it should be submitted to the headteacher for approval. If the visit requires Local Authority approval then the EVOLVE system automatically forwards the information to the Local Authority Educational Visits Adviser for approval.

It is the responsibility of the visit leader to ensure that the EVOLVE form is completed and that the appropriate risk assessments (see attached for a blank risk assessment form) are added to the system.

Attached is some useful information to be used as a check list for planning educational visits.

Procedures for organising educational visits (low risk)

Educational visits that are medium or high risk should be arranged and prepared 5 weeks in advance. Preparation for such visits should also mean regular meetings with the Educational Visits Coordinator

1. Seek permission from IRO (Educational Visits coordinator)
2. Obtain permission from EPo/CRO for cover arrangements (even if in prep time)
3. Liaise with K. Swindells (KSw) in order to complete online visits form (2 weeks in advance)
4. Photocopy the EVOLVE proposal form and all other documentation one copy to be taken on the visit. A list of pupils and staff on the visit must be attached
5. Ensure that transport is arranged and if using external provider that they are LA approved
6. Brief pupils about the visit, arrangements for dress code, code of conduct, arrangements for meals, times for departure and arrival etc.
7. Brief parents (letter is usually adequate for low risk visits), ensure that all the above are covered
8. Brief accompanying staff as above plus any individual responsibilities
9. Ensure that consent is given in **writing** by all parents and a C2 form is completed. Please note that Looked After Children need permission from their parents to attend educational visits (See JHa for any LAC pupils)
10. Put a notice in the bulletin at least 2 weeks prior to the visit to inform staff of the trip
11. Give a list of pupils on the visit to the school office and Carole Craven
12. Have a register of both pupils and staff, tick as pupils/staff get onto the coach/minibus

13. Do a headcount, ensure that seatbelts are worn and that pupils do not eat/drink on the coach/ minibus
14. Ask staff to sit in strategic positions not all at the front of the coach
15. If pupils are not under direct supervision ensure that they are aware of meeting point, first aid point, telephone numbers for emergency etc.
16. Complete FL8 (accident or near miss form) as soon as possible in the event of an accident or near miss

Request for Educational Visits and Trips Approval – Residential visit

Date of Event _____

Brief description of itinerary

Address of Base

Contact telephone numbers (One of which must not be a mobile)

Number of Pupils _____

Number of staff _____

Signed _____ Name _____

Date _____

Approved by _____ (Chair of Governors)

Date _____

RISK ASSESSMENT

DATE RISK ASSESSMENT PREPARED:

ACTIVITY:

VENUE DETAILS:

HAZARDS	CONTROL MEASURES	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

RISK ASSESSMENT REVIEWED BY:

NAME OF SCHOOL:

DATE OF VISIT:

DATE OF REVIEW: