



HIGHGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Educational Visits Policy January 2022

Introduction

Trips, visits and learning off-site comprise an essential part of the school curriculum at Highgate Primary School. Successful trips provide memorable learning experiences and enhance the children's education in ways that are not possible in the classroom. The school is committed to providing school visits as a positive tool to develop pupils' independent, investigative learning, and to build their experience of the local and wider world.

Within school, responsibility for educational visits rests with the Governing Body, Headteacher and the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC), however all school employees have a responsibility to:

- take reasonable care of their own and others' health and safety
- co-operate with their employer
- carry out activities in accordance with training and instruction
- inform the employer of any serious risk

This policy been produced to offer school staff advice and support in the planning and organising of all off-site activities in order to ensure the health and safety of pupils.

Definition

For the purposes of this policy, an 'educational visit' means any educational, cultural or sporting activity that requires the pupils to leave the school premises having been authorised to do so by the Headteacher. This includes the following:

- Visits to places of interest in the local area
- Day visits to museums, galleries and places of educational interest
- Forest School
- Sporting activities including swimming sessions
- Outward bound and adventurous activities
- Visits abroad

Aims and expectations

Most classes in the school will have one educational visit each half term, although there may be fewer in Reception and Nursery. These trips are planned to support and broaden the children's understanding of the current topic. Class teachers may arrange additional visits throughout the year following authorisation from senior leaders, providing the costs for the school year are not excessive. In addition to this, there will be additional trips arranged throughout the year, such as sports, citizenship, music or Mandarin trips. All activities are available to all children irrespective of needs, ethnicity, gender or religion.

Planning and Preparation for a trip

The Educational Visits Coordinator

The school has appointed an Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) whose role is to coordinate the planning and management of these activities. All off-site activities must be approved by the EVC at least two weeks prior to the proposed date of the trip, unless the trip has been planned in response to an educational opportunity that has arisen, for example a last minute invitation to a significant event or rearranged sporting fixture. Where possible, dates for educational visits will be set at the beginning of the calendar year to enable office staff to book tickets and transport as applicable.

Procedure

The best practice to be adhered to in the arranging of school trips is as follows:

- In consultation with class teachers and/or phase leaders as applicable, the office will book the entire trip on the agreed date(s).
- Office staff will calculate a cost per pupil, inclusive of transport and insurance. This must be sufficient to cover the entire cost of the trip, including any charges for additional helpers.
- Once confirmed with the venue and transport providers, the dates for the trip must be entered onto the school electronic diary
- In cases where school lunches are affected, kitchen staff must be informed by the school office
- The EVC must be informed using the 'Educational Visits Risk Assessment Form' at least two weeks prior to departure. This can be found on the shared drive in 'Teachers Only/Risk Assessments', and is attached here at Appendix I.
- Class teachers will inform parents in advance of dates for school trips in class half-termly letters, with further specific details in a separate letter, giving at least two weeks' notice (unless there are exceptional circumstances).
- Where applicable, parental volunteers will be asked for. Where there are more volunteers than spaces, parent helpers will be selected using a fair and transparent process.
- If appropriate, payments will be made directly to the school office via the school payment system on the school website.

Risk assessments

A full risk assessment must be completed two weeks prior to a trip, which must be approved by the school's EVC, using the school's risk assessment template. To support the process, existing risk assessments can be used, evaluated and updated, including generic risk assessments provided by the centre to be visited, risk assessments completed by colleagues who carried out the same trip and/or the generic risk assessments available on the school server.

The risk assessment must include details of any specific medical issues, additional support for individual children and details of adult helpers. A copy should be taken on the trip, and another copy left with the EVC.

Parental consent

In accordance with the Home School Agreement, most parents give blanket permission for their child to attend school trips. As a result, permission is no longer requested from parents for individual school trips or sporting activities. However, parents will always be informed about the trip or activity by email or letter. All the necessary details will be included in the letter, as well as any payments required.

Permission will be specifically requested from parents for:

- Residential trips
- Adventure trips (e.g. outward bound) or a long journey
- Nursery trips
- Trips that take place outside of school hours

Ratios

All trips are individually risk assessed to ascertain the safe level of adult supervision required. Below are the recommended minimum adult to pupil ratios that our school is committed to implement. These are adhered to unless there are exceptional circumstances and/or permission has been given by the Headteacher following an assessment of risk taking into consideration the nature of the trip.

- Reception classes - 1:4
- Years 1 – 3 - 1:6
- Years 4 – 6 - 1:15
- Adventurous activities -1:10
- Residential visits – 1:10
- Visits abroad 1:10

If a child with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education Health Care Plan is participating in the trip, this pupil must have the same support that is ordinarily available to them during the school day.

Residential trips

In the case of residential trips, a parents' meeting will be held well in advance of the trip. This will provide all the relevant information, including the details of payment plans, which are always available on request. Special equipment/clothing will be listed as required; for example, for adventurous visits, additional or waterproof clothing may be necessary. Emergency telephone contacts must be obtained for all pupils participating in residential activities, along with relevant medical information, on the parental consent form. The school will ensure that adults of each gender accompany the children on residential visits.

Payments for trips

When planning educational visits, class teachers will always consider the cost implications for parents. Excessively expensive trips will be avoided wherever possible. All payment by parents for school trips is made in the form of a voluntary contribution. However, in the event that the school is unable to cover the costs of a planned visit, the trip might have to be cancelled. All payments are made online via the school website.

In the case of trips within London, class teachers will always seek to use public transport (which is free for school children) unless there are good reasons not to.

For residential off-site visits where the costs are likely to be higher, payment plans are available, to spread the cost.

In certain cases, the school may be able to subsidise the cost of school trips. In these cases, parents need to complete a request form which is kept in the school office.

Behaviour on school trips

The school's Behaviour Policy applies equally to children when they are being educated off-site. Indeed, being outside of the school, expectations are even higher as children are acting as ambassadors for our school. We expect our pupils to behave courteously to all members of the public that they meet. It is essential for their own safety that they listen carefully to their accompanying adults and act on any instructions given to them. It is also essential that all children actively participate in all aspects of the trip as trips are an integral part of the child's education. Children will always be reminded of the behaviour expectations before going off-site on their visit.

Trip Safety

The school takes the safety of its pupils on off-site visits extremely seriously. All supervising adults must be made aware of the duty of care which is placed upon them. The school's Safeguarding Policy will be implemented during all off site activities. The school will adhere to the following to ensure the safety of children on educational visits:

- An adult of each gender to accompany mixed groups of pupils if possible
- Newly Qualified Teachers to be accompanied by an experienced member of the teaching staff on their first visit
- Supervising adults to include a member of staff with knowledge of basic First Aid, if possible
- For EYFS trips, at least one first aider must accompany children
- Supervising adults must know of any special medical details relevant to any pupil
- First aid kits and any individual medicines, e.g., asthma pumps, must be taken on the trip
- Children to be briefed about the importance of staying with their partner/group/adult helper

- Any adult who has not been DBS checked should not be left alone with children during any activity
- Adults must never travel alone with a child in their own vehicle
- Any adult helpers must be fully briefed prior to leaving, in writing, with names of children in their group, expectations and responsibilities, and mobile numbers of members of staff
- When walking along a pavement, children must be in a line in pairs (or single file if necessary) with teaching staff at the front and rear, and other adults alongside
- Regular headcounts to be taken

Emergency procedures

The trip leader must always complete the Emergency Arrangements section of the Risk Assessment Form prior to any educational visit. In cases where a child or children need urgent medical attention, one staff member will accompany that child (or children) for treatment, while other staff members and adults remain with the rest of the group. School will be notified at all times, and they in turn will notify parents.

In the unlikely event that a child becomes separated from their group, they must follow the steps below, about which they will have been briefed prior to departure:

- Wait so that the trip leader can re-trace their steps to locate the child
- If a child has been left on the tube/train, they are to get off at the next station and wait
- Speak only to adults in uniform, e.g., TfL staff, police etc. but under no circumstances go with them

The trip leader and one other member of staff will search the immediate vicinity. Another member of staff will assume overall responsibility for the group during the absence of the trip leader to maintain the safety and well-being of the other children.

If the child is not found after approximately 20 minutes, the trip leader will phone the school office to notify them and ascertain whether they have any information. The school will notify the parents.

The trip leader will contact the police after 30 minutes of the child going missing. Once the police arrive, all relevant information about the child will be given, so that the police can take over the search. The trip leader will remain with the police to comfort the child when found and maintain regular contact with the school. The remaining staff and adult helpers will return to the school with the rest of the children.

When the situation has been resolved, the headteacher and SLT will conduct a full investigation to ascertain how the incident occurred and revise the risk assessment procedures where appropriate.

Other Relevant Policies and Documents

This policy complements and supports a range of other policies:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy

Contacts:

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Rebecca Lewis: Deputy Headteacher

Policy Monitoring and Review

A copy of this policy is available to all staff and parents and is published on the school website. This policy is reviewed every two years by the Governors' Health and Safety Committee.