

The Gordon Children's Academy



PART OF THE THINKING SCHOOLS ACADEMY TRUST



Community – Responsibility– Aspiration - Achievement

EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

Inception date: July 2020

Review Date: July 2022

Overview

The school acknowledges the great value of Educational Visits in broadening and enhancing both the learning and social experience of pupils.

Under guidance which came into effect on 1st March 2004, all schools are required to have a named Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC), who will ensure that the planning and supervision of all visits and adventurous activities meet the DfE Requirements and LA guidelines.

EVC is Mrs Youseman

Approval for Visits

All matters regarding each visit outside school – feasibility, planning, safety, organisation etc. – will require the prior approval of the EVC.

Approval of 'normal' day visits is at the discretion of the EVC/Head. However, visits that are either:

- Overseas
- Residential or
- Involving an adventurous activity will require the additional approval of the Trust (Visit Form online through EVOLVE). The governing body should be made aware of these visits at the beginning of the academic year.

If an external provider or tour operator is being used, they must complete the detailed Provider Form at the time of the provisional booking.

Competence to Lead

Any member of staff leading a visit will need to have their 'competence to lead' assessed before approval for the visit is given. For the majority of visits this will be assessed by the EVC. In the case of the leading (i.e. instructing) of adventurous activities the assessment is undertaken by the Trust by means of an online Activity Leader Form, using the procedures and criteria.

Reasons for Visits

It is essential that all visits have sound and clearly stated educational aims. Trips 'for the sake of it' will not receive approval.

Assessment of Risk

All Activity Leaders are required to carry out a Risk Assessment of the activity and submit this to the EVC for approval.

'Risk assessment' is a careful examination of what could cause harm to pupils, staff or others, together with an identification of the control measures necessary in order to reduce risks to a level which, in the professional judgement of the assessor, is deemed to be acceptable (i.e. below)

In considering risk, there are 3 levels of which visit leaders should be mindful:

- Generic Risks – normal risks, attached to any activity out of school. These will be covered by careful completion of the 'Educational Visits Checklist'
- Event Specific Risk – any significant hazard or risk relating to the specific activity and outside the scope of item 1 above.

- Ongoing Risk – the monitoring of risks throughout the actual visit as circumstances change.

Plan B

Despite the most detailed and sedulous pre-visit planning, things can go wrong on the day, e.g. parent helper is unavailable, member of staff is ill, transport fails to arrive, museum have lost booking, etc. To avoid having to make important decisions under pressure, it is important that some advanced thinking be done to cater for any foreseeable eventuality. This takes the form of Plan B and should be included in the information prepared prior to the event.

Staffing Ratios

A professional judgement must be made by the Visit Leader, Headteacher or Deputy as to the appropriate ratio for each visit – (suggested ratios: - Year R, 1,2 & 3 pupils 1:8 ratio and Year 4,5 & 6 1:10)

This will be determined by:

- Type, duration and level of activity
- Needs of individuals within the group (SEND – behaviour, dyspraxia, visual impairment etc.)
- Experience and competence of staff and accompanying adults
- Nature of the venue
- Weather conditions at the time of year
- Nature of transport involved

Supervision

All members of school staff must supervise pupils throughout all visits. The trip leader must ensure that any volunteers or supervising parents are paired with a member of school staff for the duration of the visit.

Role of Supervising Parents

Supervising parents must be DBS vetted, fully briefed on the programme, venue, activities, supervision arrangements and their responsibilities. They must also be given a written list of the pupils in their immediate care, and be shown the completed risk assessment prior to the visit.

First Aid

The level of first aid provision should be based on risk assessment. On all visits there should be a member of staff who has an appointed First Aid Certificate. The Appointed Person First Aid Certificate is the minimum requirement for residential visits but we will endeavour to include first aiders who are trained to a higher level of competence.

First aid kits are available at the front office prior to the trip; if the visit involves the party splitting up by any distance, a kit should be taken for each group.

Pupils participating in educational excursions who have specific medical conditions must have their needs catered for. Checks should be made prior to the activity taking place to ensure their needs are met. Checks should be made prior to the activity-taking place ensure medication is included in a 'Day Pack' or 'Residential Pack' and be clearly named with instruction for administering. Medication should be administered in the same way, as it would be if the child were at school. Staff should log and sign to show that medication has been given and signatures from staff member that administered medication as well as staff member who witnessed the dosage and frequency should be recorded.

Transport

Travel arrangements should be included in the risk assessment. If public transport is to be used, all pupils and supervisors must be fully briefed as to procedures on platforms, at bus stops, on busy streets etc.

If travel includes walking to and from the venue a map of the route must be given alongside the risk assessment so that it is clear to see the route that is going to be taken.

If travel is by coach or minibus, all pupils must wear a seat belt. Staff must ensure that pupils comply with this rule; pupils may also be asked to check the seat belt of their neighbour.

The height of individual children will be assessed and car seats used where appropriate to do so.

If any pupils are to travel by car, the driver must complete a 'Use of a private car to transport your people form'. This is also relevant to sports fixtures, and applies to both staff and parents' cars. A new form must be completed every academic year. Certificates of insurance and driver's license will be copied and retained in school.

Water 'Margin' Activities

Where pupils might participate in learning activities near or in water, such as a walk along a riverbank or seashore, collecting samples in ponds or streams, or paddling or walking in gentle, shallow water, then the guidance contained in DfE 'Group Safety at Water Margins' is relevant. Protocols must be discussed with all supervising adults including parents prior to the visit. A copy of this guidance is available at school.

Education Visits Checklist

This checklist is an essential part of the risk management process and is applicable for all visits.

Seeking Parental Consent

Parents should be made fully aware of any likely risks of the visit and their management, so they may consent or refuse on a fully informed basis (known as 'Acknowledgement of Risk').

The activity letter home must clearly state all activities that will be taking place. For instance, if the intention is for the children to play in a park, this must be included to ensure all parents are aware of the activities to provide informed parental consent.

The letter to parents should therefore give full details of the visit, the reason for the visit (educational aims), supervision arrangements and the transport arrangements. Ensure that detail of other incidental activities is included, together with Plan B if appropriate. The letter should also state the cost of the visit per child.

The reply slip should read:-

"I give permission for my child _____ in _____ class to join the school trip. I have read and understand the information about the activity. I enclose a voluntary amount _____ to cover costs. In the event of an accident I delegate the authority to the person in charge to administer or agree to the necessary administration of first aid."

In the case of sports fixtures, the reply slip should read:-

"Name of child _____ Class _____"

I give permission for my child to take part in the _____ at _____ I have read and understand the information about the activity.

In the event of a medical emergency, I give consent for a member of staff to sign on my behalf any forms if the delay in obtaining a signature was considered inadvisable by the doctors".

Before the Visit:-

- 1a) Complete pre EVOLVE form and pass to EVC Lead together with the school's request form
- 1b) Fill in the school's preliminary form at least 6 weeks in advance of an activity. Copies should go to the office and EVC. If the activity has been planned well in advance, then these forms should be completed soon after the trip has been planned.
- 1c) In the case of residential, overseas, or adventurous activities, complete relevant forms as detailed in the 'Approval for Visits' above.

If approved:-

- 2) book visit
- 3) book transport
- 4) send letter home
- 5) complete risk assessments
- 6) complete education visit checklist and copy to EVC

The day before the visit:

- Collect first aid kits
- Ensure asthma inhalers, medication, Epi-Pens are in date, collected and clearly labelled
- Collect high visibility vests
- Collect spare set of clothes

On the Day of the Visit:

- Collect any 'Day Packs' required
- Collect lunches from Kitchen
- Collect bucket if appropriate (travel sickness)
- Brief supervising parents and all adults attending about agenda for the day as well including 'Plan B' and risk assessment
- Give all adults and supervising parents a copy of the risk assessment
- Give supervising parents their lists of pupils
- Ensure that a minimum of one mobile phone is working, and that the office has the number(s)
- Ensure that all pupils attending have clothing fit for purpose of the trip
- Ensure that trip leader has all permission slips with contact details
- LEAVE A COPY OF PAPERWORK AND REGISTER IN SCHOOL OFFICE AND WITH EVC

The trip leader must inform the school when they arrive at the venue and again when they are leaving to ensure that the school can give correct information to parents.

During the course of the visit, pupils should be counted regularly as appropriate, and always when changing locations. Supervising adults should always 'double count' participants.

The mobile phone(s) should be switched on during the entire homeward journey.

After the visit

It is important that after each visit a proper debrief takes place. This should take place within a week of the visit date, and should involve the Visit Leader, accompanying staff and, if appropriate, the supervising

parents. The purpose of debriefing is to identify what went well and what could have been done better, in order to inform future planning.

If a parent refuses consent for a trip

If a parent chooses not to give their consent for their child to attend a school trip they will be asked to confirm in writing and to sign and date the written confirmation.

The child will be expected to attend school on the day of the trip. They will spend the day working in another year group classroom completing work to support the learning they are missing by not attending.

If the child does not attend school on the day of the trip, they will receive an unauthorised absence unless medical evidence can be produced and handed to the Attendance officer.

All paperwork should be returned to the EVC for whole school evaluation