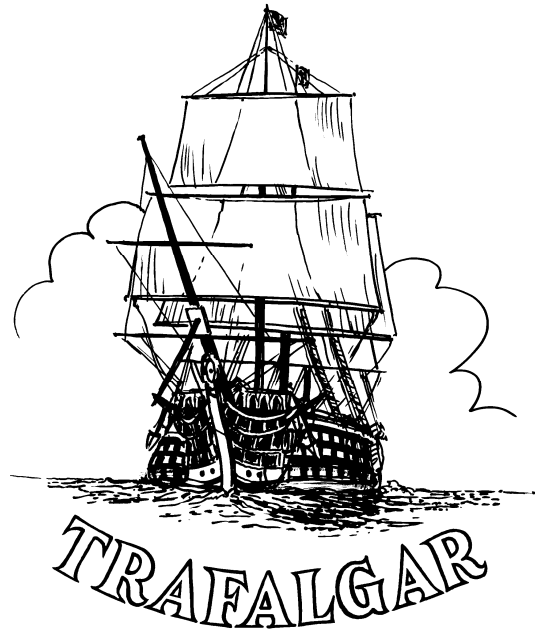


Trafalgar Community Infant School



Policy Document

EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

Trafalgar is a Rights Respecting school. We refer to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) throughout this policy.

Introduction

Off-site visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of the school, and which take place outside the school grounds. The governors and teaching staff believe that off-site activities can supplement and enrich the curriculum of the school by providing experiences which would otherwise be impossible. All off-site activities must serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching the children's learning experiences.

In this policy, we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our off-site visits, and to ensure that any risks are managed and kept to a minimum, for the health and safety of all pupils at all times. We seek to make our visits valuable to all pupils, and wherever possible to make them accessible to those with disabilities. The visits all take place within the school day.

All children have the right to relax and play, and to join a wide range of activities – Article 31.

Aims and Objectives

The aims of our off-site visits are to:

- enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our children
- provide a wider range of experiences for our children than could be provided on the school site alone
- promote the independence of our children as learners, and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.

Responsibility for Off-Site Visits

West Sussex County Council is responsible for the health, safety and welfare of all their employees and volunteers involved in approved activities. This responsibility, made under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, extends to employees working off-site.

The Headteacher is required to ensure that the agreed County procedures are fully and properly implemented each and every time a group of pupils leave the premises.

The Governing Body should be satisfied that the activity will be effectively organized and supervised and is, in all circumstances appropriate.

The named Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) will be involved in the planning and management of off-site visits - see role responsibilities below.

Year group Team Leaders are responsible for the writing of risk assessments and documenting appropriate safety measures.

Enshrined within the terms and conditions of employment of all teaching staff is the requirement for a duty of care to be demonstrated to all pupils.

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator Role is to:

- liaise with the LA to ensure visits meet the risk assessed requirements
- support the Headteacher and Governors with the approval of visits
- know the procedures for approving school visits, financial accounting, making contact with external providers and keeping parents informed
- make sure CRB disclosures are in place where necessary
- ensure adequate risk assessments have been completed and appropriate safety measures are in place
- ensure liaison with parents / guardians and obtaining consent are effective
- ensure an Emergency Contact has been nominated and details of the group and their parents will be available to that person
- keep records of visits including reports of incidents and 'near incidents'. Review systems and monitor practice.

Staff arranging or otherwise involved in off-site activities must familiarise themselves with the regulations, advice and procedures published by the LA. All off-site activities must take place in accordance with the LA's instructions. These can be found on the Educational Visits Online Virtual Environment (EVOLVE) website – www.westsussexvisits.org.

Where staff are proposing to arrange an off-site activity, they must seek and obtain the approval of the Headteacher before any commitment is made on behalf of the school.

It is our policy that all children should be able to participate in educational visits. Where a child with a disability is eligible for a trip, we will make every effort to ensure that s/he is included. We may seek guidance from parents / guardians to help us adapt our programme, and we will make any reasonable adjustments to our itinerary to include a child with disabilities. Any such adjustments will be included in the risk assessment.

Risk Assessment

A comprehensive risk assessment is carried out by a Team Leader before the proposed visit. It will assess the risks which might be encountered on the visits, and will indicate measures to prevent or reduce them. Risk Assessments need to be shared with the EVC and Headteacher for approval.

The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations;

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures are needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the teaching staff involved put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

Children need to be involved in making the risk assessment e.g. *What are the risks? What would you do if....?*

Prior to an activity, if it is felt that the behaviour of an individual child is likely to compromise the safety of others or the good name of the school. The Team Leader should discuss with the Headteacher the possibility of excluding that child from the activity.

A risk assessment must also cover transport to and from the venue. The coach company we use on a regular basis has provided us with a letter detailing all the health and safety measures it routinely takes, including:

- the provision and required use of seat belts;
- vetting of the driver by the police;
- insurance for the driver;
- details of first aid and emergency equipment;
- vehicle maintenance;
- office contact details.

A copy of this letter is kept in the school office and in the EVC's file.

It is our policy only to use coaches fitted with seat or lap belts, and to insist that they be worn by all those participating on the visit.

It is school policy for staff not to transport children in private cars.

All completed risk assessments are currently kept in the EVC's file and in the school office. As a whole school, we are learning about and developing our use of the new EVOLVE website in order for risk assessments to be produced online and so that all teachers have access to them and supporting documentation for educational visits.

On completion of a visit the Team Leader must complete an evaluation and review. This can be recorded in the final column of the original risk assessment or on the Visits / Visitor Evaluation Form – Appendix C.

Use of Outside Agencies

When an activity involves the use of the resources or expertise of an establishment or organization other than that of the school, the Team Leader must establish that the agency involved is competent and any establishment safe. Information about possible establishments that may be used can be found on the EVOLVE website.

Supervision

Guidelines state the overall ratios must not exceed the following minimum levels:

Reception

One adult for every 4 children

Years 1-2

One adult for every 6 children

In situations where it is proposed that the children, relatives or close friends of staff will be with a school group on an off-site activity, then there is a risk that conflict of roles may occur. Participation of any of these adults needs to be considered carefully and acceptable.

All adults involved in the off-site activity need to be fully briefed as to the purpose of the visit, their responsibilities, the level of supervision required, standards of behaviour expected and made aware of any potential hazards. They must be made aware of the emergency procedures and provided with an emergency telephone number. This will normally be the school telephone number.

Pre-Visits

Staff planning an off-site activity need to make a preliminary visit to the venue, in order to carry out an on-site risk assessment. It is important to take into account the probable weather conditions at the time of year proposed for the trip and the facilities available. The sites suitability should be assessed with regard to the age and any particular needs of the children. Staff will need to consider the venues own approach to security and health and safety. Venues providing instructor-led activities will have their own risk assessments for particular sessions, and these assessments may be adopted. Even when the visit is made regularly, risks should be assessed to take into account any changes to the proposed site visit or group of pupils you intend to take.

Communication with Parents / Guardians

Letters are sent to all parents / guardians when children are to leave the school premises for off-site visits (except for local, routine off-site visits e.g. visits to local features, visits to the local library, where a separate generic consent form is completed on entry to school).

Parents need to be made fully aware of the nature of the visit and the activities to be undertaken and must give written consent. The Team Leader will take the permission forms and any medical information with them on the visit.

In certain circumstances parents may wish to exercise their right to refuse to allow their child to take part in the visit. Under such circumstances, every effort will be made to make alternative arrangements to ensure that the Early Years Foundation Stage or National Curriculum work that was being developed during the visit is made available in another form. The refusal of the parent to allow the child to take part in an off-site activity does not offer the opportunity for a day off.

First Aid

An off-site visit must include a trained appointed person. Portable first aid kits are taken on all off-site visits which are checked prior to the visit.

Costing / Insurance

The costing of all off-site visits should include any of the following that apply:

- transport
- entrance fees
- insurance
- provision of any special resources or equipment
- costs related to adult helpers

For all off-site visits (except of the local area) school insurance is taken out with Zurich. The cost of the insurance is built into the cost of the visit. Parents / Guardians may be asked to make a voluntary contribution.

Emergency Procedures

A named point of contact at school should be established prior to the visit. Along with the Team Leader they must keep readily available details of the names, addresses and telephone numbers of parents or guardians of all the participants (including staff), together with any medical information, for use in an emergency. In case of an emergency a mobile telephone is taken on any off-site activity by the Team Leader.

The procedures for Emergency Planning **must** be followed. Therefore, each activity Leader **must** carry the schools Emergency Plan with them. A Major Emergency is defined as being when a West Sussex school has suffered serious or life threatening injury or fatality or is reported missing or in peril.

See Emergency Plan.

Supporting Documents

WSCC Planning Checklist for off-Site Visits – Appendix A

Risk Assessment and Risk Management proforma – Appendix B

Visit / Visitor Evaluation form – Appendix C

Emergency Plan – Appendix D

Reviewed Spring 2010.