



Downe Primary School

Educational Visits

	Name of School	Downe Primary School
	Policy reviewed by:	Staff & Governors
	Policy review Date	DEC 2022
	Date of next Review	

Context

We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every pupil to an effective and balanced curriculum. Appropriately planned visits are known to enhance learning and improve attainment, and so form a key part of what makes Downe Primary School a supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits to pupils of taking part in visits and learning outside the classroom include, but are not limited to:

- Improvements in their ability to cope with change.
- Increased critical curiosity and resilience.
- Opportunities for meaning making, creativity, developing learning relationships and practicing strategic awareness.
- Increased levels of trust and opportunities to examine the concept of trust (us in them, them in us, them in themselves, them in each other).
- Improved achievement and attainment across a range of curricular subjects. Pupils are active participants not passive consumers, and a wide range of learning styles can flourish.
- Enhanced opportunities for ‘real world’ ‘learning in context’ and the development of the social and emotional aspects of intelligence.
- Increased risk management skills through opportunities for involvement in practical risk-benefit decisions in a range of contexts. ie. encouraging pupils to become more risk aware as opposed to risk averse.
- Greater sense of personal responsibility.
- Possibilities for genuine team working including enhanced communication skills.
- Improved environmental appreciation, knowledge, awareness and understanding of a variety of environments.
- Improved awareness and knowledge of the importance and practices of sustainability.
- Physical skill acquisition and the development of a fit and healthy lifestyle.

Application

Any visit that leaves the school grounds is covered by this policy, whether as part of the curriculum, during school time, or outside the normal school day.

In addition to this Educational Visits Policy, Downe Primary School:

1. Adopts the Local Authority’s (LA) document: ‘**Guidance for Educational Visits and Related Activities with National Guidance & EVOLVE**’ (All staff have access to this via EVOLVE).
2. Adopts National Guidance www.oeapng.info (as recommended by the LA).
3. Uses EVOLVE, the web-based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication system for off-site activities.

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with this school policy, Local Authority policy, and National Guidelines. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

Types of Visit & Approval

There are three 'types' of visit:

- 1. Visits/activities within the 'School Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day.**
These follow the 'School Learning Area' Operating Procedure (Appendix 1).
- 2. Other non-residential visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity. Eg. visits to museums, farms, theme parks, theatres, etc.**
These are entered on EVOLVE by the visit leader and submitted to the EVC for checking. The EVC then submits to the Head for approval.
- 3. Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity.**
These follow 2. above, but require additional checks prior to approval

Roles and responsibilities

Visit leaders are responsible for the planning of their visits, and for entering these on EVOLVE (where required). They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the Headteacher or EVC prior to planning, and before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements, and should seek advice from the EVC where necessary.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is Jodene Panteli who will support and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom (LOtC) activities. The EVC is the first point of contact for advice on visit related matters, and will check final visit plans on EVOLVE before submitting them to the Head. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, and uploads generic school documents, etc.

The Headteacher has responsibility for authorising all visits and for submitting those that are overseas, residential or adventurous to the LA for approval.

The Governing Body's role is that of a 'critical friend'. Individual governors may be given 'read-only' access to EVOLVE.

The Local Authority is responsible for the final approval (via EVOLVE) of all visits that are either overseas, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity.

Staff Competence

We recognise that staff competence is the single most important factor in the safe management of visits, and so we support staff in developing their competence in the following ways:

- An apprenticeship system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced visit leaders before taking on a leadership role.

- Supervision by senior staff on some educational visits.
- Support for staff to attend training courses relevant to their role, where necessary.

In deciding whether a member of staff is competent to be a visit leader, the Headteacher will take into account the following factors:

- Relevant experience.
- Previous relevant training.
- The prospective leader's ability to make dynamic risk management judgements, and take charge in the event of an emergency.
- Knowledge of the pupils, the venue, and the activities to be undertaken.

Emergency procedures

A critical incident is any incident where events go beyond the normal coping mechanisms and experience of the visit leadership team.

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a critical incident during a visit (see Appendix 2). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan and it is tested at least annually and following any major staffing changes.

When an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, or where it involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention then assistance will be sought from the local authority.

Parental Consent

Consent is not required for activities within the School Learning Area that are part of the normal curriculum during normal school time.

The school obtains blanket consent at the start of each year for certain other routine activities, eg. after school fixtures, etc.

Specific, (ie. one-off), parental consent must be obtained for all other visits. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents (via EVOLVE, letters, meetings, etc), so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis.

Inclusion

As a school we comply with the Equality Act 2010. Where it may be deemed that a child may pose a risk to themselves or others while participating in a visit the school will first complete a risk assessment which will be discussed with parents.

Where absolutely necessary a child may be excluded from a visit when behaviour does not reach the expected standard, only after authorisation by the Headteacher. A risk

assessment of the individual child must be undertaken to ascertain whether this is the only course of action.

Charging / funding for visits

No child will be excluded from an educational visit due to their ability to pay the suggested voluntary contribution. The school however reserves the right to cancel a visit if they do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions to break even.

Transport

Hired/self-drive minibus - the school follows National Guidance in regards to self-drive minibuses.

Use of staff cars to transport pupils -the school follows the LA's guidance document.

Data Protection

See Data Protection Policy.

Health and Safety

See Health and Safety policy

Insurance

The school is insured with Risk Protection Management (RPA) Local Authority Maintained Schools (LAMS). See sections 10 and 11 for UK and overseas travel.

Appendix 1 - School Learning

General

Visits/activities within the 'School Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day follow the Operating Procedure below.

These visits/activities:

- do not require parental consent
- do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below).
- should be recorded on EVOLVE if regular, eg swimming lessons
- do not need to be recorded on EVOLVE if these are ad-hoc activities

Boundaries

The boundaries of the School Learning Area are shown on the map below. This area includes, but is not limited to, the following frequently used venues: e.g.

- *High Elms*
- *St Mary's Church*
- *Downe Village*



Operating Procedure for School Learning Area

The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our School Learning Area:

- Road traffic.
- Other people / members of the public / animals.
- Losing a pupil.
- Uneven surfaces and slips, trips, and falls.
- Weather conditions.
- Activity specific issues when doing environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles, berries, rubbish, etc).

These are managed by a combination of the following:

- Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved to lead a visit
- The concept and Operating Procedure of the 'School Learning Area' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school
- There will normally be a minimum of two adults on any visit.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas', and have practiced appropriate group management techniques.
- All volunteers have an enhanced DBS certificate. Where parents/carers accompany a visit will not be left unsupervised with children.
- Pupils have been trained and have practiced standard techniques for road crossings in a group.
- Where appropriate, pupils are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group.
- All remotely supervised work in the School Learning Area is done in 'buddy' pairs as a minimum.
- Pupils' clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness prior to leaving school.
- Staff are aware of any relevant pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available.
- Staff will deposit in the office a list of all pupils and staff, a proposed route, and an estimated time of return.
- A mobile is taken with each group and the office have a note of the number.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (eg gloves, goggles)

Appendix 2 - Emergency Procedure

Emergency Plan For Educational Visits

The main element is to ensure that there is a swift and appropriate response in the unfortunate event of a serious incident.

1) The Group Leader with the school party should take charge in an emergency. The Group Leader needs to ensure that emergency procedures are in place and that back up cover is arranged if necessary. The Group Leader should also liaise with the representative of the activity centre or place of visit.

2) The Group leader will communicate with the school.

3) The school must have all necessary information about the visit and all contact numbers for the children and staff. The school contact will then contact the parents as necessary

What to do in an emergency

The group leader should -

- Establish the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible and secure the area.
Ensure that all other members of the group are accounted for and are safe and well looked after.
Establish the names of any casualties and get immediate first aid medical attention if necessary
- Call the emergency services as required or arrange for this to be done.
- Ensure that all group leaders who need to know are aware of the incident.
- Ensure that a member of staff remains at the accident site with the injured person or accompanies casualties to hospital and that the rest of the group are adequately supervised at all times and kept together and returned to school or base as necessary
- Inform the school. The school contact number should be accessible at all times during the visit.
 - Details of the incident need to be passed on to school should include; nature, time of incident; names of casualties and details of their injuries; names of others involved so that parents can be reassured; action taken so far; proposed further action (and by whom);
 - Record all details in writing as soon as is possible. Record names and addresses of witnesses.
 - If the Media / press become involved make no comment and refer them to the school. Liability should not be discussed or admitted. Record any potentially compromising actions or comments.
 - In the case of fire or a security alert the group leader will need to follow the directions of the staff at the site and/or the police (especially regarding evacuation and mustering points).

The school should-

- Prior to the visit, the name and school/home/mobile telephone numbers of a school contact should be identified and supplied to group leader. It is advisable to arrange a second school contact as a reserve. Bear in mind that the contact line may become busy in the event of an incident and that alternative numbers to ring would be useful. Ensure that all contact numbers of persons on school visit are current and up to date.
- In an emergency ensure the Group Leader is in control of the emergency and establish if any assistance is required from the school. The head teacher will decide whether to send a further member of staff to the location at this point. Ensuring there is a responsible contact left at school to liaise and deal with enquiries.
- Contacting parents. Details of parents' contact numbers need to be available at all times while the group is on the visit. The school should act as a link between the group and parents. Parents should be kept as well as informed as possible at all stages of an emergency. It is a priority that the school speak personally to the parents of any student who has suffered injury or mishap.
- Make and keep a full record of the incident.
If a serious incident occurs, the school should liaise with the LBB (In office hours ring Director of Education 020 8313 4060 out of office hours ring 020 8464 4848) & Chair of Governors as soon as possible. For purchasers of LBB Insurance - Emergency Contact for advice and assistance in connection with medical and repatriation arrangement is: Chubb Assistance - +44(0) 20 7895 3364
- The name or names of any casualties should not be given to the media.
- Complete accident forms and return to Central Health & safety (ARR3)
- Notify insurance brokers
Liability should not be discussed or admitted. Record any potentially compromising actions or comments.

After a serious incident occurs

It is not always possible to assess whether group members not injured or directly involved in the incident have been traumatised or whether other pupils or staff in the school have been affected. In some cases reactions do not come to light immediately. Schools in this situation have found it helpful to seek professional advice on how to help individuals and the school as a whole cope with the effects of a tragedy.

Appendix 3 - Speaking to the Media in an emergency

We tend not to have pre-set answers as much depends on the situation one is presented with, however there are some general points you can observe such as:

- It is often preferable to take contact details and questions and call the journalist back, or better still ask them to email their questions if you have access to email. Also find out their deadline. This buys a bit of thinking time.
- Find out what the journalist knows - which may not be everything that you know - then you can decide what to say next.
- If you don't know, don't confirm or deny anything straightaway until you have the facts and don't elaborate or fill the journalist's silences.
- Don't be drawn and think you have to answer every question, don't let the journalist put words into your mouth.
- Is there someone else leading or speaking on behalf of the emergency - for instance the police or fire brigade - you could refer the journalist to them.
- Have other people been appraised of the situation - don't let parents find out information from the media.
- Avoid a 'no comment' situation - write down your statement and stick to it unless something changes. This may simply be to say that you are not in possession of all the facts at this point so it would not be appropriate to comment further at the moment. This may well apply if others such as parents need to be informed first, or there is a formal investigation in some way.
- Once you have a written statement, this will suffice for any further calls you may get.
- Stick to the facts - don't give personal opinions.
- Use common sense around a sad situation, saying that your heart goes out to the family or our thoughts are with the families, or something like this is not an admission of guilt, it is purely a normal human reaction to very bad news. It can be followed up with a comment suggesting that it would not be appropriate to comment further at this (sad) time.
- Remember: never say anything that you would not be happy to be published widely.

If you do have an emergency on a visit that is likely to generate media interest, it is your 24/7 emergency contact that should be dealing with them so your visit leaders must ensure that the 24/7 is informed immediately and is kept updated with developments. Please make your Visit Leader's and Appointed Signatories aware of this information.

If you are a Community or Voluntary Controlled school, you can speak to Susie for further advice;

Susie Clark
Corporate Communications
Tel: 020 8461 7911
Mob: 07889 60708

Appendix 4 - Covid Guidance

See Covid Policy