



**Cockton Hill Junior School**  
**Educational Visits Policy 2022-2023**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This policy covers all educational visits that occur off the school premises and those which take place outside the classroom while remaining on the school premises. This includes any member(s) of staff taking an individual child, groups of children, whole classes, or all the children in the school, and ranges from mini beast searches in the school grounds, walks around the locality to residential visits of several days' duration. It includes also Outdoor and Adventurous Activities.

Educational Visits and Outdoor and Adventurous Activities are an integral part of the children's education at Cockton Hill Junior School. They offer opportunities to enrich the curriculum, enabling the children to have first-hand experience of a wide range of topics and activities. On residential visits especially, there is opportunity to develop social skills which have a long-lasting beneficial effect. The benefits include; Developing Individual Potential, Spiritual and Emotional Development, Improved Understanding and Awareness of the Environment, Other Cultures and Real World Learning, Improved Learning Skills, Improved Teamwork and Improved Relationships.

The school runs a wide range of Educational Visits. These include:

- Walks around the town of Bishop Auckland, including visiting the local church, Auckland Castle and local primary and secondary schools.
- Sports and Art activities organised by our feeder secondary schools.
- Half-day or full day visits to places of historical, environmental, religious or other interest to support specific curriculum areas.
- An annual residential visit for children in Year 4 and 6.

## **EMPLOYER'S POLICIES AND OEAP NATIONAL GUIDANCE**

Durham County Council has adopted the OEAP Employer Guidance as its operating Guidance for the management of Visits and learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) activities. Cockton Hill Junior School also uses this Guidance when planning and taking children on school visits as well as the requirements of this school policy.

## **2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Educational Visits Coordinator for Cockton Hill Junior School are: **Jill Cooper and Beverley Dodd**

The **Local Authority** are responsible for:

- Approving overseas, residential and adventurous activities
- Giving advice to Educational Visits Co-ordinator.
- Giving access to appropriate training.
- Ensuring relevant risk assessments are completed and in accordance with Durham County Council guidance.
- Monitor work of Educational Visits Co-ordinator.

**Governors** are responsible for:

- Supporting the Educational Visits Co-ordinator.
- Being aware of visits and asking questions about their educational objective.
- Ensuring the Educational Visits Co-ordinator has explored all risks, put in place safety procedures, included all pupils and informed Durham County Council if necessary.

**Head Teacher is** responsible for:

- Appointing an Educational Visit Co-ordinator and ensuring that the EVC has received training for their role;
- ensuring approval for visits is given, including liaising with the LA where appropriate;
- ensuring that the Governing Body is made aware of visits;
- ensuring that arrangements are in place for the educational objectives of a visit to be inclusive;
- ensuring that all accreditation or verification of providers has been met;
- ensuring that each visit has an appropriately competent Group Leader;
- ensuring that all teachers are aware of the LA guidance;
- ensuring that the school has an emergency procedure in case of a major incident, which has been discussed and reviewed by staff.

**Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)** is responsible for:

- keeping an educational visits log, including an up to date policy and blank copies of Internal Visits Proformas, evaluation forms and risk assessment forms and making these available to the staff.
- keeping a folder with all the completed risk benefit assessment forms, Internal visit proformas and evaluation forms, located in the file in the staffroom.
- liaising with group leaders over completion of forms previously mentioned
- approving visits and completing this approval via the EVOLVE system
- ensuring the issues identified on the preliminary visit have been resolved within the risk benefit assessment, if necessary.
- ensuring accreditation / verification of providers has been checked.
- ensuring correct ratio of adults to children and first aid supervision in place.
- ensuring transport and accommodation arrangements meet standards required by LA.
- keeping copies of accident or incident reports.
- organising related staff training, where applicable.
- ensuring a blanket EV4 form is completed in the pupil induction pack
- Additional consent forms are completed for trips further afield, which are residential or where pupils complete in adventure led activities
- ensuring parents are informed of trips by group leaders and have given consent if a donation is requested or the trip takes place out of school hours.
- reviewing systems and monitoring practice.
- ensuring teachers update their risk assessment record for their class general information about pupil's medical conditions, special needs and behaviour at the beginning of every school year
- ensuring visits are evaluated to inform the operation of future visits.

The **Group Leader** has overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the pupils during the visit and must:

- Use the 'Visit Leader Checklist'
- Use the SAGED approach to decide the level of planning required.
- If appropriate, ask whether the provider holds a valid Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge. (Details of the badge and a list of holders can be found at [www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk](http://www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk)) If not, then the provider is required to complete the 'Provider Questionnaire' and a preliminary visit may be required to assess the risks.
- Complete Risk Assessment forms and submit them to B Dodd who will upload them to EVOLVE. Keep copies for self and all adults supervising the visit.
- Ensure correct ratio of adult supervision – discuss with the EVC if unsure.

- Make pupils and other adults aware of all aspects of the visit, including risks, groups, behaviour expectations, and the focus of the trip. Give a copy of everything to a second adult in case something happens to you!
- Continually assess risk during the visit.
- Take a first aid box and sick bucket.
- Take the school mobile phone for emergency use and the 'visit leader emergency checklist'
- Inform parents of their child's participation in a particular visit. The letter will be a reminder of consent given and will also be an opportunity to update participant information. This will be coordinated by the school office. Activities that involve a charge, or that include agreement to any payment or cancellation terms, will need individual consent by parents to the financial arrangement.
- Obtain permission from parents, unless they have signed the admission consent form (staff to check which children do not have permission). Consent only needs to be sought for activities that need a higher level of risk management or those that take place outside school hours, for example for adventurous activities, off-site sporting fixtures outside the school day or residential visits.
- Recognise children's medical, special needs and behaviour requirements by keeping the 'Class general risk assessment' up to date, and put appropriate measures in place to reduce the risks.
- Provide emergency cards for pupils if they are visiting a public open space e.g. city walk, residential,
- If trip is outside school hours; take a list of children's names, addresses and telephone numbers, in case parents need to be contacted.
- 'Check out' and 'check in' before and after a visit
- Ensure all pupils and supervisors arrive back at school safely.
- Complete an 'Evaluation Form' to inform future planning.

**Other adults** are expected to:

- Follow guidelines from group leader.
- Ensure the safety of the group they are responsible for.

**Pupils** are expected to:

- Wear appropriate clothing and footwear.
- Behave appropriately.
- Consider their safety and the safety of others.

### **3. RISK MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT**

'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. low).

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 reference the school's generic risk assessments.
- Event Specific Risk - any significant hazard or risk relating to the specific activity that is not covered in the generic risk assessments. These should be recorded on the 'risk assessment' form.
- Ongoing Risk – the monitoring of risks throughout the actual visit as circumstances change.

Visit Leaders must refer the 'Visit Leader Checklist' as part of the risk management process. A set procedure is followed for all Educational Visits, although the nature of each visit will determine the level of preparation required. The SAGED model should always be considered when planning an EV: Staffing, Activity, Group, Environment, Distance should be used to

determine the level of planning and whether an additional risk-benefit assessment form is required.

When using an external provider, such as an activity centre, for which you have received appropriate assurances, you need to assess the risks only for those aspects of the visit where Cockton Hill Junior staff are in charge (e.g. transport to and from the venue and supervision during non-programmed time).

When using a provider, you do not need copies of their risk assessments. If they hold a valid Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge (or, in the case of adventurous activities within the scope of the schemes, an AALA licence or Adventure mark) this provides assurance that they meet accepted standards of risk management. Otherwise you should seek written assurance that they have appropriate risk management systems in place.

Risks are expected to be reduced to an *acceptable* or *tolerable* level, and not necessarily eliminated. Planning should achieve a rational balance between potential adverse risks and the intended learning benefits.

### **Generic risk assessments**

Regular local visits and activities such as; swimming lessons at the Woodhouse Close Pool, sporting fixtures, walking visits around Bishop Auckland and coach travel are all covered by generic risk assessments which form the agreed principles for conducting these visits. However, these may need to be accompanied by a SAGED risk benefit assessment, described above, if any of these aspects are not covered adequately in the generic risk assessment.

### **Ongoing Risk Assessment**

Monitoring of the visit must be on-going during the visit, and this contributes towards both enjoyment and safety.

It is primarily the responsibility of the visit leader, in consultation with other staff where appropriate, to modify or curtail the visit or activity (eg Plan B) to suit changed or changing circumstances - for example: over-busy lunch area, rain etc.

### **Ratio**

As a general guide and in normal circumstances, the adult /child ratio may be:  
7-11 years old –1:10

However, a professional judgement must be made for **each visit**, by the Visit leader, EVC and Head Teacher , as a range of characteristics relevant to the particular visit should determine the ratio. These are:

- Type, duration and level of activity
- Needs of individuals within the group medical, SEN and behaviour
- Experience and competence of staff and accompanying adults
- Nature of venue
- Weather conditions at that time of year
- Nature of transport involved

The competence of supervisors and the supervision arrangements are more important than ratios.

## **4. VOLUNTEERS**

When going on a trip, volunteers who are not DBS checked, should not be in-charge of a group or left alone with any children.

## **5. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND INCIDENT REPORTING**

Visit leaders must identify a school contact and telephone number for Emergencies on the Internal Visit Proforma. The Emergency Contact(s) should have access to all details of the visit, including the itinerary, venue details, names and emergency contact details for all participants including staff. They should also have a copy of the 'Visit Leader Emergency Checklist' which sets out the local authority's procedures to be followed in the case of an emergency. Visit leaders must take with them a copy of the 'Visit Leader Emergency Checklist'.

### **Plan B**

Despite the most detailed and careful 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. To avoid having to make important decisions under pressure, it is important that some advanced thinking is done to cater for any foreseeable eventuality. This takes the form of a Plan B. Not having a Plan B has been a common cause of accidents.

### **6. INCLUSION**

All children are entitled to participate in all our Educational Visits. Adaptation or modification to activities is to be made if needed and possible to include all children.

School is in a position to support those families who are unable to make donations for educational visits. Please see our Inclusion Policy and Charging Policy.

### **7. HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The School's Health and Safety Policy will be adhered to fully when taking children out of school.

#### **Monitoring**

This is a whole school policy of which staff, children and parents have ownership and therefore working together as a whole is essential for it to work effectively.

This policy was ratified by the Full Governing Body in the autumn term 2022.