



Castle School

Educational Visits Policy

Policy Preface

Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust is a Christian learning environment at the heart of its communities. We promote care and respect, and expect high standards in all aspects of our Trust life.

As a Church of England Academy Trust, we aim to build communities clearly based on the Christian values of love, forgiveness and reconciliation, integrity and the unique value of each individual. We aim to build self-esteem, model conflict resolution, protect the weak and are committed to justice and compassion. Mutual respect and trust are central within the Academy Trust.

This policy, and its associated procedures and protocols, is based on these key principles.

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Educational Visits Policy

1.0 Philosophy

At Castle School we believe that it is the entitlement of every pupil within the school to visit a wide variety of places at the appropriate stage of their time in school in order to enhance their learning.

2.0 Aims

Educational visits at Castle School are designed to be experiences that are not available in the classroom, that reinforce our curriculum in a practical way as well as developing the independence and confidence of pupils by practising skills learnt in school.

3.0 Teaching and Learning Styles

A wide range of opportunities to investigate and interpret a variety of stimuli should be experienced. Wherever possible, multi-sensory stimuli should be included e.g. sound, touch, smell. The visit should be used to enhance a variety of cross-curricular themes and dimensions, and to support the generalisation of skills across the curriculum. Follow up work may be continued in the classroom. The use of photographic evidence and materials may also be used as an extension of the visit, particularly to promote episodic referencing and opportunities for pupils to evaluate their learning and experiences.

4.0 Differentiation

Activities need to be practical in approach and should be accessible to all members of the group/class. Educational visits will often be undertaken as part of a whole class group, but occasionally, small groups or individuals will have planned outings e.g. shopping or to the leisure centre. Class staff will be encouraged to consider the learning opportunities of these for each individual pupil, and to use this as the basis for the decisions that they make in relation to grouping and organisation for visits.

5.0 Equal Opportunities

All pupils, irrespective of race, gender or physical difficulty will have access to educational visits. Voluntary contributions will be sought from parents/carers to finance trips where reasonable.

6.0 Assessment, Recording and Reporting

School will ensure that Curriculum Planning includes sufficient well-structured opportunities for pupils to engage in learning outside the classroom as a key, integrated element of their experience. All visits should be well planned in advance, have a specific goal and be related to Learning Objectives. Staff are trained to use an online system called Evolve as an electronic planning and monitoring system. Teachers will assess and evaluate after the visit to ascertain if Learning Objectives have been met and it has had maximum impact on pupils' achievement, personal development and well-being. Recording will be through photographs, written evidence, follow up work, discussions in the classroom etc.

7.0 Home/School Liaison

Parents/carers will usually be informed of the regular half day visits through the Home/School Diary, e.g. the location of the visit, activities undertaken and how the pupils responded. Parents/carers will be asked to give their written consent for any medical treatment which may be necessary during the course of a visit.

If a voluntary contribution is suggested, it must be made clear to parents that there is no obligation for them to make a contribution. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then it may be cancelled. Parents/carers will be contacted immediately should any emergency arise and will be informed after the visit of their son/daughters response to the visit.

8.0 Organisation and Safety

Please refer to the Trust Educational Visits and Health and Safety policies. This is a framework for staff when planning to take pupils offsite. All staff involved in a visit must be competent in their allotted tasks and fully briefed as necessary. All staff should be clear about their role when taking part in the visit as a group member/assistant supervisor and should follow the instructions of the designated Visit Leader, who will have sole, over-all charge of the visit.

Child protection procedures are in place, (see the Trust Safeguarding Policy) including vetting at an appropriate level of all voluntary helpers. The school's Educational Visits Co-ordinator attends training to ensure the latest guidance is implemented. In school the most recent training has included the use of Evolve. All drivers of the school minibus must show their driving licence to the school Office Manager and show competence of driving through undertaking MIDAS training.

Details related to the visit and participants (including staff) are accessible to a designated emergency contact (Principal) at all times in case of a serious accident.

Contingency plans must be in place should the visit plan be significantly changed or cancelled.

For high risk activities the group leader must make a preliminary visit if not familiar with the facility. The facility's own risk assessments should be obtained and scrutinised for their suitability and amended if necessary.

External providers should hold a LOtC quality badge. A provider's form must be completed prior to visit approved if this is not held. All visits are evaluated with regard to the best value, teaching and learning, quality experiences, and address issues raised by a serious incident that might inform the operation of future activities/visits.

Castle School has an Educational Visits Coordinator and the Principal is designated as Deputy Educational Visits Coordinator – both have had additional training to undertake this role.

For all off site visits, a Risk Assessment needs to be completed and uploaded to Evolve along with the visit details. This information is then sent automatically to the Educational Visits Co-ordinator.

If this is a regular event, one risk assessment will be completed for the term and all dates will be added to the visit details in Evolve. If conditions change, then the visit leader needs to update the risk assessment.

If the visit is a one-off, for example to a museum, a risk assessment needs to be completed and uploaded to Evolve along with the visit details at least a week prior to the visit

In exceptional circumstances, paper based risk assessments and school visit details may be handed to the Educational Visits Co-ordinator two days prior to the visit, after agreement from the Senior Leadership Team.

Classes undertaking full day visits or visits that require a packed lunch should inform the kitchen, in writing, two weeks prior to the visit and record the visit in the school diary and arrange transport if required. Pupils in receipt of free school meals will be supplied with a packed lunch.

Medication required for individual pupils must be collected by staff and remain with staff at all times during the visit. All relevant paperwork and procedures for administering medication must always be adhered to. (For further details please see the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions). Only trained staff can administer medication. Staff should be fully aware of Health Care Plans and Individual Behaviour Plans (IBPs) before taking pupils out of school. School staff need to liaise with health staff prior to an educational visit with regards to the health aspect of the risk assessment.

8.1 How Staff Access Guidance

- Policies and Risk Assessments are discussed at Staff Meetings and Governor Meetings.
- Copies of all policies are available on the school network and website and staff are reminded that they can request a hard copy of any policy from admin staff.
- Staff can also access guidance through Evolve under the 'NG' tab (National Guidance) and the 'Resources' tab.

9.0 Roles and Responsibilities

9.1 The Role of the Local Governing Body

- To adopt Trust Educational Visit guidance and Castle School's Educational Visits policy.
- Ensure there is an appropriate Educational Visits Coordinator in place who has received approved training.
- There are notification and approval processes both at school level and between the school and the Trust.
- Ensure that the Educational Visits Policy supports the principles of inclusion.

9.2 Role of Education Visits Coordinator (EVC)

- The EVC is an experienced Visit Leader.
- The EVC takes a lead on assessing the competence of activity and visit leaders, the role is not to be regarded as administrative.

The EVC will ensure that:

- They have attended EVC training as required by the Trust.
- Off-site activities meet employer guidance requirements.
- The Principal, Visit Leaders, assisting staff and voluntary helpers understand that all staff involved in visits require access to training at an appropriate level to ensure that procedures are properly understood.
- Off-site activities are led by competent leaders.
- Assistant staff are competent to carry out the tasks to which they are assigned.
- Visit planning is monitored in the field as appropriate.
- DBS checks are in place where required.
- There is an emergency contact(s) for each and every visit and that emergency arrangements are in place.
- Medical and first aid issues are addressed.
- Emergency arrangements include contact access to all relevant visit records, including medical and next of kin information for all members of the party and including staff.
- Visits and activities are reviewed and evaluated and this process will require the reporting of accidents and incidents.

- Visit policies and procedures are reviewed on a regular basis and immediately following any serious incident or systems failure.
- Keep up to date via EVC training events and Trust information updates.

9.3 The Use of Voluntary Helpers

- Voluntary helpers may assist on visits during normal school hours.
- All volunteers have identity checks and are DBS checked.
- All volunteers must follow directions of the Visit Leader.
- Volunteers complete induction training and must be familiar with any Individual Behaviour Plans and communication passports for the group of pupils they are with.

10.0 School Procedures

For visits during the school day the Visit Leader must:

- Complete visit information on Evolve.
- Complete necessary risk assessments and upload to Evolve.
- (If paper based, complete request for visit form and necessary risk assessments).
- Send to Educational Visits Co-ordinator for approval.
- Complete request for packed lunches if required and hand in to kitchen at least two weeks before the visit. Pupils in receipt of free school meals will be supplied with a packed lunch.
- Inform parents in writing that visit will take place.
- Get written permission if trip is not covered by general parental permission.
- On day of visit.
 - * Review Risk Assessment, make any necessary adjustments.
 - * Collect any necessary medication and sign out – on return put back in locked cupboard and sign back in.
 - * Collect packed lunches if ordered.
 - * Collect a first aid kit, and take a mobile phone. Ensure Admin have mobile numbers.
 - * Ensure staff and children are signed out before leaving the site.
 - * If using the school minibus complete all checks.
- On return – sign the group back in.
 - * Evaluate visit on Evolve
 - * Inform parents of pupils' response to visit.

11.0 Arrangements for Monitoring

- The Principal monitors all requests for visits and risk assessments through Evolve.