



St. Patrick's R.C. Primary School



## Education Visits Policy

Date	Review Date	Coordinator
September 2018	September 2019	M Ryan

### OVERVIEW

#### ***What are the benefits of educational visits?***

At St. Patrick's Primary School we believe that carefully planned and well prepared educational visits play an important role in significantly broadening and enhancing both the learning and social experiences of pupils. The benefits of taking learning outside of the classroom are immeasurable; strengthening relationships, sparking interests and generating enthusiasm are just the tip of the iceberg. Often, it is the school visits that provide the defining memories of a child's primary experience and it is our responsibility to make those memories good ones!

### PLANNING AN EDUCATIONAL VISIT

#### ***What needs to be considered before planning a visit?***

Taking children outside the confines of the school gates will always carry an element of risk. However, it is important that these potential risks are outweighed by the potential benefits. When planning a proposed school visit, Group Leaders should consider the following points to ensure the visit provides a striking impact on the children involved.

- Will the children enjoy the visit and will activities generate enthusiasm?
- Does the visit provide relevant links with the children's learning and/or appeal to their interests?
- Will the activities involved aid progression in the children's physical/social/academic skills?
- Are the activities involved age appropriate?
- What is the suitability for children with educational, physical, medical or behavioural needs?
- What is the distance and length of journey?
- What will be the rough cost for parents?

Where possible, a preliminary visit should be made by the Group Leader. Depending on the level of risk associated with the activities involved, educational visits fall within three different categories. Each category requires a different level of

planning, preparation, risk assessment and approval, as set out in OCC guidelines. Group Leaders should consider the category of their visit during the planning stage.

### ***What types of visit fall into each of the three categories.***

According to OCC guidelines:

- **Category A:** most visits in primary schools – no significant risks e.g. local walks, local field studies.
- **Category B:** some higher risk activities e.g. hill walking, camping, cycling in non remote areas.
- **Category C:** potentially hazardous activities; permission required from LEA using Form MA1 – also applies to all visits abroad.

### ***Who approves educational visits?***

Approval of all 'off site' activities, falling within category A or B, is at the discretion of the Headteacher. The Headteacher is also responsible for assessing the competency of the member of staff leading the visit (referred to as the 'Group Leader'). **Approval from the headteacher must be sought by a member of staff before bookings can be made and before any visits can take place.**

A brief 'Proposed Educational Visit Form', outlining initial plans, needs to be completed by the Group Leader and handed to the Headteacher for approval. This must be done before any venues or transport are officially booked and at least 3 weeks before a visit is intended to take place.

However visits that fall within category C (overseas, residential, involving adventurous activities or activities at a water margin) will require the additional approval of the Governing Body and the Local Authority. As such, they will need to be planned from 12-4 months in advance, as per OCC statutory guidelines.

## **ASSESSMENT OF RISK**

### ***What is a risk assessment?***

A risk assessment is a thorough and detailed examination identifying any potential hazards likely to cause harm during a visit and specifying who they are likely to cause harm to. The worst case scenario for each of these hazards is considered and the level of risk for each one is assessed (high, medium or low). Specific control measures are identified for each hazard in order to reduce risks to an acceptable level (preferably low, but can occasionally be medium providing stringent measures have been put in place).

### ***Why is it necessary to complete a risk assessment?***

Completing a risk assessment promotes and encourages a rigorous and detailed thought process. It plays a crucial role in ensuring the Group Leader is well prepared for every situation. Should the worst happen whilst on an educational visit, this document provides the evidence that every measure possible was put in place and actioned to assess and minimise risk. Risk assessments are kept in archive for this reason.

### ***What needs to be included on a risk assessment?***

When completing risk assessments and identifying potential hazards, Group Leaders should consider the following:

- Generic Risks – normal risks attached to any activity out of school.
- Event Specific Risks – any significant hazard or risk relating to the specific activity and outside the scope of the generic risks.
- Ongoing Risk – the monitoring of risks throughout the actual visit as circumstances change.
- Plan B! - To avoid having to make important decisions under pressure, it is important that some advanced thinking is done to cater for any foreseeable eventuality

***Who approves the risk assessments?***

All completed risk assessments should be submitted to the EVC at least 48 hours before the visit commences, before being checked and signed off by the headteacher. This 'double approval' approach provides opportunities for discussion in which questions can be raised and, if necessary, allows time for further risk-reducing measures to be put in place.

***What is the next step?***

Once a risk assessment has been completed and approved, Group Leaders are responsible for ensuring all accompanying adults read and sign the risk assessment prior to the commencement of the visit.

Group Leader are also responsible for ensuring all control measures are actioned Group

Leaders to take a copy of the risk assessment for their own records. They must also place a copy in the 'School Visits Risk Assessment Archive' file in the school office. All risk assessments will be kept in archive until the children involved in the visit have turned 18 years of age.

**\*\*If any significant incidents occur during the visit, on return, the Group Leader should make a written record and attach to the relevant risk assessment in the archive file\*\***

**INCLUSION**

***Who can benefit from educational visits at St. Patrick's?***

St. Patrick's Primary School believes that educational visits should be made available to all pupils, including those with educational, physical or behavioural needs.

***How can children's individual needs be accommodated?***

Where possible, reasonable adjustments will be made to accommodate all needs. Specific and stringent control measures will be put in place, via the risk assessment process, to minimise any potential risks posed by individuals and ensure that the visit is a safe and enjoyable experience for all.

***What are the expectations of behaviour on a school visit?***

The school behaviour policy, focusing on reward, choice and consequence, will be reinforced on all school visits. Clear boundaries and high expectations will be set.

However, should an incident of unacceptable behaviour occur during the visit, and the Group Leader perceives it as putting the individual, other children or adult helpers at a high level of risk, the parents/guardians will be contacted to arrange collection of their child. Should the parents/guardians be uncontactable or unable to collect their child, school will be contacted and an alternative arrangement will be made.

## **STAFFING RATIOS AND SUPERVISION**

### ***What is the recommended staffing ratio of children to adults?***

The Law does not prescribe activity or age specific staffing ratios, Instead it requires that the level of supervision and management is “effective”. However, the following ratios (below) have been given as a starting point. These are to be adhered to as an absolute minimum. However, without special safeguarding or control measures, these ratios will not be adequate to meet the needs for most residential or complex visits.

- **FS** – As per the specific legal requirements for minimum ratios set out in the Early Years and Foundation Stage Framework. (These are complex and include requirements regarding the qualifications of the staff). As a guide 1:3
- **Years 1 and 2** – 1:4
- **Years 3 and 4** – 1:8
- **Years 5 and 6** – 1:10

A professional judgement must be made by the Group Leader and EVC regarding the ratio for each visit as part of the risk assessment process. There must be an appropriate level of supervision at all times which will be determined by:

- The type, duration and level of activity.
- The needs of individuals within the group.
- The experience and competence of staff and accompanying adults
- The nature of the venue
- The weather conditions at the time of year
- The nature of transport involved

### ***How will adequate supervision be provided?***

Pupils must be supervised throughout all structured activities and free time for the duration of the visit.

However, it is acknowledged that some activities may involve aspects to encourage independence and investigation and that this may be the sole objective of the activity. When planning their visit, Group Leaders must consider the competency of all participants to be remotely supervised and the competence of supervisors to supervise.

All supervising adults must be fully briefed on the programme for the day, the venue and any planned activities. In particular, they need to be informed of any supervision arrangements and their responsibilities. A written list of the pupils in their immediate care should be provided along with a mobile contact number for the Group Leader. All supervising adults must ensure that regular head counts are conducted, particularly when moving location.

Mixed residential parties will require both male and female supervising adults to accompany the visit.

***What is the role of parent helpers?***

Parent helpers are welcomed on school visits. The time that they volunteer is gratefully received and the contribution that they make in the smooth running of our visits is not underestimated.

It is only necessary to carry out CRB checks on volunteers who do not have regular (three or more times in a 30 days period, or once a month or more, or overnight) and involves contact with children, then an Enhanced CRB Disclosure should be obtained. Under no circumstances must a volunteer who has not obtained a CRB disclosure be left unsupervised with children. It should be noted that not all unpaid workers are categorised as volunteers, student teachers and people gaining work experience, although unpaid for their time are not considered volunteers therefore the normal CRB checks and payments should be carried out in line with standard procedure.

All parent helpers must read and sign any risk assessment for the visit. However, volunteer adults must never be placed in a position of overall responsibility and should not be left unsupervised with children without a CRB check.

**FIRSTAID AND MEDICAL NEEDS**

***What happens if a minor injury occurs during the visit?***

All school visits should have an accompanying member of staff who is first aid trained and holds a valid first aid certificate. Each class has its own first aid kit. If the visit involves the party splitting up, each adult should be provided with a small first aid kit.

***What happens if there is an incident of travel sickness during the visit?***

The Group Leader is responsible for ensuring that they have prepared the appropriate equipment to enable them to deal with any travel sickness. (Sick bucket located in first aid room).

***How will medical needs be met?***

The Group Leader is required to check the list of medical needs for the children attending the visit (Kept in the office) to ensure they are aware of any child's particular medical needs and their medical care. All necessary medication, such as epi-pens, inhalers, diabetic emergency kit, etc must be taken on the visit and available to the child at all times.

Completed medical forms will be obtained from the parents/guardians prior to all residential visits. This information will be collated to ensure the correct administration of any medication. All medical information is kept confidential.

A signed medical form needs to have been completed by the parents/guardians for any medication to be administered by staff (including travel sickness tablets).

## **TRANSPORT**

### ***What is the procedure if transport is provided by coach or mini-bus?***

If travel is by coach or minibus, all pupils and staff must wear a seatbelt. Staff must ensure that pupils comply with this rule. Coaches to be booked through reputable company.

### ***What is the procedure if transport is provided by private car?***

If any pupils are to travel in a car belonging to a member of staff, the staff member must have produced insurance documentation, MOT certificate and a valid driving license. A volunteer driver declaration (VDD) also needs to be completed.

If pupils are to travel in a car belonging to a parent/guardian (e.g. for sporting fixtures). Contact details of willing volunteer parents to be passed on and transport to be arranged privately amongst the parents.

Children under 1.2m to use car booster seats when travelling in a car. These are kept in the first aid room.

## **PARENT INFORMATION AND CONSENT**

### ***What information needs to be communicated to parents/guardians for Category A visits?***

A generic permission slip for 'low risk' visits in the immediate area is sent out to all children in September. On return of this consent form, it is valid for the duration of the academic year. St. Patrick's staff will always endeavour to notify parents/guardians when these local excursions are planned.

For Category A visits that take place beyond the immediate locality, further consent needs to be sought. To enable parents/guardians to make an informed choice when granting consent, the following information needs to be given. This information should be communicated via a letter and return slip, sent out no later than 1 week in advance.

- The date and timings of the planned visit
- A breakdown of costs and deadlines for payment
- The reasons/objectives behind the visit
- The nature of any activities
- The mode of transport
- A list of necessary equipment

### ***What further information needs to be communicated for Category B and C visits?***

For Category B and C visits. The following information needs to be communicated. This should be done via a combination of both letters and parent information meetings, providing the parents/guardians with the opportunity to ask questions and raise concerns. For residential visits, the first parent information meeting needs to take place more than 6 months in advance.

- Daily itineraries
- Dietary provision
- Safeguarding measures
- Supervision and Loco Parentis
- Medical procedures
- Emergency contacts

### **CRITICAL INCIDENT PROCEDURES**

#### **What is the procedure in the event of an emergency?**

The Group Leader must ensure that full details of the visit are retained at school by office staff/headteacher who can be contacted if there are changes of plan or if there is an emergency. If visit takes place outside of school hours, the Group Leaders should take all emergency contact details of the children involved in the visit.

The Group Leader and staff must be familiar with and act in accordance with the HASPEV Emergency Procedures listed below:

- Seek immediate medical attention for any casualties
- Ensure that any casualty going to hospital is accompanied by a teacher
- Maintain adequate supervision for the remaining group members
- Notify the police and or the British Embassy as appropriate
- Keep the emergency school contact informed of the nature, date and time of the incident, location, names of casualties and details of their injuries, names of others involved so that parents can be reassured.
- Record accurately, as soon as possible, all relevant facts and witness details and preserve any vital evidence.



**St. Patrick's School**

Proposed Educational Visit Approval Form

Date:	Year group:
Destination:	Number of children:
Name of Group Leader:	Number of adult helpers needed:
Proposed activities:	Travel arrangements? (Include rough timings if possible)
	Preliminary visit conducted? YES                  NO
	School diary checked? YES                  NO
Potential benefits: *  *  *	Potential risks: *  *  *
<i>For use by Headteacher</i> Approved?      YES    NO      Signed: _____	

**Please submit to Headteacher at least 3 weeks before proposed 'off site' activity**

## ChecklistforGroupLeaders



### BEFORETHEVISIT

Research venue and, if possible, conduct a preliminary visit.

Fill in the 'Proposed Educational Visit Form' at least four weeks before the visit, for the Headteacher to approve (check against school diary first)

Once approved, book venue and transport via school office

send out relevant form/letter to parents

Monitor permission slips received back and, if necessary, chase up any that are still outstanding.

Complete risk assessment(s) and submit to EVC at least 48 hours before visit.

File the completed risk assessment in the archive file in the office.

Write an itinerary/timetable for the day and group the children

### ONTHE DAY OF THE VISIT

Gather first aid kits/adult survival kits

Gather buckets in case of travel sickness

Take all necessary medication (epi-pens, inhalers etc)

Brief supervising adults and give them their list of children.

Ensure all supervising adults have read and signed the risk assessment(s).

Ensure that supervising adults have a mobile phone and that they are able to contact the Group Leader during the visit.

Count pupils and remind them to take all necessary belongings with them (coat, packed lunch etc)

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

### AFTERTHEVISIT

Make a written record of any significant incidents and attach to risk assessment in the archive file.

## GroupLeaderSupervisionChecklist



- o Have you:
  - Allocated supervisory responsibility to each adult for named pupils
  - Ensured that each adult knows which pupils they are responsible for
  - Ensured that each pupil knows which adult is responsible for them
  - Ensured that all adults understand who is the overall Group Leader responsible for the supervision of the group
  - Ensured that all adults and pupils are aware of the expected standards of behaviour
  
- o Does each supervisor have a reasonable prior knowledge of the pupils, including special or medical needs
- o Has each supervisor
  - A list of pupils in their group
  - Been instructed to supervise pupils directly
  - Been instructed to regularly check that their group is present
  - A clear plan of the activity and its purpose
  - The means to contact the Group Leader or other supervisors if necessary
  - The competence to exercise appropriate control of the group
  - An understanding of procedures in the event of an emergency
  
- o Has each pupil
  - Been informed who their supervisor is, where he/she is and how to contact them
  - Been given clear, understandable and appropriate instructions
  - Been told never to be alone
  - Been told a meeting place to return to, or instructions to remain where they are, if separated from the group
  - Been told of the expected standards of behaviour

<b>Headteacher:</b>	M. Ryan	<b>Date:</b>	September 2018
<b>Chair of Governing Body:</b>	G. Wilson	<b>Date:</b>	September 2018