



DAME DOROTHY PRIMARY SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

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Headteacher	<i>I Williamson</i>
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Mission Statement

"We strive to provide a safe and happy environment where children are encouraged to be creative, resilient and hard working"

"At Dame Dorothy Primary School we have high expectations for all pupils regardless of their starting point. Learning is at the core of all we do making full use of the places around us."

Introduction

The school will provide a copy of this policy in different formats upon request to ensure that it complies with obligations under the Equality Act.

It is our aim through the guidelines laid down in this policy to provide the safest possible environment for all trips. Whilst recognising that it is impossible to foresee all eventualities, we believe that through careful planning and adherence to policy guidelines we can negate many of the hazards inherent in off site visits, ensuring safe, rewarding and enjoyable experiences for all.

Staff responsibilities

The LA has produced guidelines for school visits and will be monitoring schools to make sure the guidelines are being followed. All schools must now have a policy for taking children off site and a nominated educational visits coordinator. Carol Pearson is Dame Dorothy Primary School's EVC.

Supervising staff (teachers and adult helpers) have a responsibility to ensure that all visits are conducted as safely as possible. The current "climate of blame" means that should an accident occur it is likely that a claim for damages may be made against the school or LA.

The authority (update December 2011) have issued the following information regarding the completion of written risk assessments.

Category of visit	Definition	Requirement for notification & approval
Category 1	Straightforward routine visits defined as Category 1 in a written policy by the school or service concerned, covered by: A general risk assessment regularly reviewed. · informed parent/carer consent · School/service operating procedures	Evolve may be used but is not required
Category 2	Visits requiring enhanced planning with event-specific risk assessment, including: · All residential visits not in Category 3 · Non-residential visits not in Categories	Must be authorised by the Headteacher using Evolve. This provides automatic notification to the Council of the visit
Category 3	Higher risk visits, defined as: · Visits outside the UK · Visits which include adventure activities · Visits to remote or hazardous locations.	Must be authorized by the Headteacher/Manager using Evolve at least four weeks before the visit and then approved by the Council

Category 1 visits

The school will have generic risk assessments for local walks to St Peters, Tesco, Roker Park and any location within walking distance of the school. The school will also have a generic risk assessment for visits to local secondary schools. These risk assessments will be subject to regular review.

Visits to outside providers i.e. Beamish Museum, Alnwick Castle etc. will all require specific risk assessments to be entered onto EVOLVE by staff. The school uses the LA master Risk Assessment form that must be completed and saved on the staff server and uploaded to EVOLVE. Its purpose is to make sure that the ACT (Adult in Charge of the Trip) has identified hazards that could occur and have taken steps to minimize the chance of the hazard causing injury. In general terms this means putting common sense down on paper and proving that basic risk has been assessed prior to the trip.

Category 2 and 3 visits

All visits must be entered onto EVOLVE and gain the approval of the Council.

Organising a visit can be broken down into four parts:

Planning (including risk assessment)

Preparation

The visit

Review (reviews will only take place if a problem arises on the trip – information from any such review will be circulated to all staff)

Planning

The Adult in Charge of the Trip (ACT) should be able to say why the group is visiting the place chosen. Remember that social development is part of the curriculum and visits do not necessarily need to be subject linked. Trips may also be undertaken for leisure purposes where appropriate.

It is preferable if the ACT, or another teacher /adult on the trip, have visited the place previously; if not some research must be completed to establish suitability. Is there somewhere for the children to eat; go to the toilet; access to medical assistance etc.

The ACT should know how many children are in the party and how many adults will be needed for adequate supervision. A general guide for local walks and visits to museums etc.

* Reception: 1 adult for 2-5 children (less if possible) * Y1, 1 adult for 6 children

* Y2, 1 adult for 7 children * Y3, 1 adult for 8 children

* Y4, Y5, Y6: 1 adult for every 10 children.

When leaving school premises two adults is the minimum safe number for supervision.

*At present there are no legal ratios for appropriate supervision; 'Appropriate' varies according to: the age of the children; the behaviour of the children concerned; and the activities being undertaken. There may be specific children who would need one to one supervision etc - these children should be noted as part of your risk assessment and appropriate measures taken to ensure their safe participation.

The ACT must complete a visits form from the school office and the office staff will arrange transport if needed.

The ACT may need to fill in a RISK ASSESSMENT for the proposed visit.

A copy of the new on-line Risk Assessment form can be found on the school's server under Educational Visits.

The ACT should keep a copy of the Risk Assessment forms that they complete and a copy should be kept in the staff server under Educational Visits. Venue Risk Assessments should be sought where-ever possible. If no Risk Assessment is available directly from the venue then a venue specific Risk Assessment must be completed by school staff.

If venues provide an electronic copy of their Risk Assessment it should be stored on the server under educational visits. Teacher's Risk Assessments should contain:

- Assessments of risk in relation to travel and the venue
- Medical problems that could adversely affect children / adults on the trip.
- Children who may require extra supervision: medical, behavioural.
- Details of any medicines to be taken including inhalers and adrenalin auto injectors.

Permission for all visits must be obtained prior to the visit taking place from Headteacher.

Permission for a trip is gained through submitting a completed visit form to the EVC and Headteacher, who will then authorise the trip.

Preparation

Assess supervision levels, decide how the children will be grouped. Adults, particularly parent helpers, should have a list of who is in their group. Children should be made aware of who is in their group, who their specific partner is, and who the group leader is before the visit.

Inform parents. The office will provide a standard letter giving details of the trip. These letters must be used when obtaining parental permission. Further details may be sent out by staff, but a standard letter and reply slip must be used to gain parental permission for the trip.

Obtain consent. Children who do not return a consent slip do not go on the trip, standard format consent slips must be obtained and retained. Standard consent slips will be issued by the office when letters are sent out.

You cannot exclude a child who has not paid. The school can cover a small cost if some children have not paid. This would need to be negotiated with the Headteacher.

Parents must be made aware that trips rely on the school receiving sufficient voluntary contributions and that trips may be cancelled if sufficient funds are not received. This information should be used to assess the viability of the trip.

Consent for local visits, that incur no cost, is sought in September of each new school year. However, parents must still be informed by letter when taking children

off the premises; details of where and times of the visit must be given – this letter may be written by staff, a standard consent form is not required. Ensure that the office has a copy of the letter.

Book venue and transport. If booking a coach, make sure the coach has seatbelts. Confirm bookings a day or two before the visit.

The visit

Before leaving School

- Collect packed lunches (if required).
- Collect first aid kit.
- Ensure a mobile phone is taken by a member of staff and is fully charged.
- Class inhalers (green bag) to be taken. Remember you cannot administer medicine to children.
- Make sure adults have a list of their group including any last minute changes.
- Make sure children are appropriately dressed and have had the opportunity to go to the toilet. Children who are not appropriately dressed - no coat, warm clothing during cold weather- may be excluded from the trip.
- Children to apply sunscreen if needed.
- All children to have a school wrist band fitted before leaving site.
- Teacher to hand a class attendance tick sheet into the office before leaving, with staff names also included.

During the visit

The risk assessment will probably mention appropriate supervision as the measure taken to minimise risk, particularly when groups of children are moving around.

Some examples of this are:

- Standing by the door of a coach as children get on or off.
- Making sure an adult is last on to a coach.
- Checking seatbelts are fastened.
- Frequent head counts.
- Having an adult at the back of a party.
- When crossing the road ensure the children understand how they will be expected to cross.

There are many other examples of good supervision, you should use your common sense and think ahead at all times as there could easily be hazards that were not anticipated. This is known as 'ongoing' or 'dynamic' risk assessment.

Review

A formal review of a trip will only take place if a problem is encountered. If any problem occurs on any trip - local or long distance - a review must be carried out.

Review procedure

The Headteacher and EVC must be informed of the problem.

A meeting to discuss the problem and possible solutions will be held. EVC and Headteacher plus all staff involved.

Meeting outcome / changes to procedures will be circulated to all staff.

Medical information

The ACT must ensure that they and all adults on the trip are aware of any medical problems that may affect children on the trip (details must be entered on Risk Assessment forms, and if appropriate, circulated to all necessary adults on the trip).

- Children with specific medical needs i.e. allergies that require epi pens - should be noted on the risk assessment by name and relevant school protocols observed.
- The names of children requiring inhalers should be noted on risk assessment forms, with staff ensuring that children who use inhalers carry them.

Transport

Coaches/Minibuses that transport children must be fitted with seat belts.

- Allow time at the beginning and end of trips to ensure that the children are all wearing seat belts and that the seat belts are correctly fitted and adjusted.
- During the journey children must remain in their seat and not remove their seat belt.
- Children should be supervised boarding and leaving the coach.
- It is recommended that a minimum of two adults travel on each minibus. The driver is not in a position to deal with problems whilst driving, which is why there is a need for a second adult.

Staff cars (only to be used in an emergency)

- The member of staff must ensure that their vehicle is roadworthy and that their insurance covers transporting children.
- Staff must have Class 1 Business Cover or equivalent, which allows the transport of children as part of their job - normal social and domestic car insurance does not cover the carrying of children as part of your job, even in an emergency.
- Staff should travel in pairs
- Seat belts must be worn.

Other means of transport

- Service buses should only be used for short local trips as they do not have seat belts. Part of the risk assessment for this type of travel must include recognition of the fact that members of the public will be using the service.
- Taxis - though the driver is responsible for the children during the journey, staff must ensure that safety rules are being observed before the children are transported. It is advisable that a member of staff / responsible adult travels in the taxi, as the driver cannot deal with problems that arise whilst he /she is driving.

Parents must be informed as to how their children are to be transported on the trip. This information ideally should be in the original letter. If transport details change before the trip parents must be informed.

Behaviour

A child, who, in the judgement of the Adult in Charge of the Trip (ACT) or senior staff, would present a problem to themselves or others, should be excluded from a trip rather than the trip be abandoned. This process should be carried out in conjunction with the EVC, Headteacher and the parents.

Special needs

It is recognised that not all children will be able to participate in all activities. Where children cannot access activities, reasonable adjustment should be sought enabling modified or suitable other activities to be arranged, thus ensuring that all children have a rewarding and stimulating experience.

Outward bound trips

The school uses the outdoor centre at Derwent Hill, near Keswick. Even though the centre provides qualified instructors and risk assessment for the activities, school staff retain responsibility for the children on the trip - both during activities and the residential stay.

The ACT must therefore ensure that -

- Risk assessments for the journey to / from the centre are completed.
- All teachers / supervising adults are aware of Derwent Hill's "Advice for Visiting Staff".
- All teachers / supervising adults have been invited to take part in the trip and been made aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- Parents have been fully informed about the trip - letters and a meeting in school to allow information to be passed on and to give parents the opportunity to ask questions.

Money

We cannot formally charge for visits that take place during the normal school day, we can only ask for a contribution. Letters must make clear that trips may have to be cancelled if sufficient funds were not received. The school has a letter format that should be used for all trip letters that require contributions.

Payment for trips to be handed in at the office, with cash / cheque or a payment being made on line being accepted. A receipt is given requested and a list being kept of everyone who has paid.

Money should be forwarded to the office as it is collected and placed in the secure safe with relevant details being recorded in the file.

It is preferable that an invoice is obtained for any payments required; the school can then arrange payment. Alternatively, a school cheque should be taken to make payment, rather than carrying large amounts of cash. Receipts must be retained and passed to the office on return to school.

Refunds

If a child is absent on the day of the trip a refund, where possible, should be made using the following guidelines.

- Money that is prepaid, and not reclaimable, may not be refunded: eg. travel expenses; prepaid entry that cannot be reclaimed or cancelled.
- Money that is not prepaid, or that can be reclaimed, should be refunded.

Activity definitions

Activities (low risk)

Most school visits include children undertaking some activity under the supervision of other adults - museum staff, instructors etc. A lot of these activities would not present any specific hazards; your role at this point is largely to ensure the children are behaving correctly and in the right place at the right time.

Activities that are supervised by school staff / adult helpers should all fall into this low risk category. School staff should not undertake high risk activities unless they are appropriately trained or hold appropriate certification / qualifications.

Activities (high risk)

This is an activity that you would usually associate physical danger with. Your risk assessment will have taken this into account. Only appropriately qualified staff should lead high risk activities. These activities will normally only be undertaken at a suitable venue and it is reasonable to assume that centres offering such activities have carried out their own risk assessment, this should be checked by the designated group leader at the planning stage, as ultimately, you retain responsibility for the children on the visit. If you think that the activity is being led inappropriately and children are being put at risk you must stop the activity and explain why to the adult running it.

If an accident occurs:

Most accidents are usually caused by slips, trips and falls. Hopefully any injury will be superficial and not require treatment.

Minor accident: Contact school before contacting parents. Headteacher to contact parents.

Serious accident: Assess the extent of any injury, what assistance required? First aider, ambulance etc. Seek appropriate help.

Remember to note details of how the injury occurred. Date, time, location, activity being undertaken, supervision, witnesses, other relevant detail.

- In the event of hospitalisation /serious injury contact school immediately, they will inform parents.
- In the event of critical injury, contact school who will inform the Civic Centre. If out of school hours contact the Headteacher. If they are unavailable, contact the civic centre emergency number yourself. They will take over from this point; neither you nor any of the party should speak to anyone else at this point.
- If a child goes missing staff will contact school immediately, action will be advised.
- In an emergency situation staff are to call 999 first.