

Balcombe C E (C) School



Educational Visits Policy

Adopted by Governors: Nov 2015

Reviewed: Nov 2018

Next Review: Nov 2019

Introduction

This policy covers all educational visits that occur outside the school premises. This ranges from walks around the locality to residential visits of several days' duration. It includes also Outdoor and Adventurous Activities.

Aims and Objectives for Educational Visits

Our fundamental aim at Balcombe School is to provide the best possible education for all our pupils. It is the aim of the school to place a high value on diversity, treating every member of the school community as an individual, and meeting the needs of all, taking account of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, age, ability, disability and social circumstances. In doing this, we aim, therefore, to raise the achievement of all the children in the school.

Educational Visits and Outdoor and Adventurous Activities are an integral part of the children's education at Balcombe School. They offer opportunities to enrich the curriculum, enabling the children to have first-hand experience of a wide range of topics and activities. There is also the opportunity to develop social skills which have a long-lasting, beneficial effect.

Nature of Educational Visits

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

- Walks around the village of Balcombe, including to the local church.
- Visits by coach to places of interest to support the curriculum.
- Visits to places of historical, environmental, religious or other interest to support specific curriculum areas.
- An annual residential visit for children in Year 5 and 6.

Health & Safety

The school follows the Local Authority 'Educational Visits' guidance.

Note: The LA has an Outdoor Education Adviser, who is able to give support and advice, and who has the responsibility of approving listed Adventure Activities.

Personnel

The school's Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) is the Headteacher. For each visit, of whatever duration, a Group Leader is identified.

The Governing Body will:

- ensure that guidance is available to inform the school policy, practices and procedures relating to the health & safety of pupils on educational visits;
- ensure that the Headteacher is supported in matters relating to educational visits and that she has the appropriate time and expertise to fulfil her responsibilities;
- ask questions about a visit's educational objectives and how they will be met;
- ensure that visits are approved as necessary by the LA before bookings are confirmed;
- ensure that the Headteacher has taken all reasonable and practicable measures to include pupils with special educational needs or medical needs on a visit;
- ensure that they review procedures with the Headteacher on an annual basis.

The **EVC** will:

- ensure educational visits meet the school's requirements;
- support the Governors with approval and other decisions;
- assess the competence of prospective leaders and staff;
- ensure that Risk Assessment meets requirements;
- organise training and induction;
- ensure parents are informed and have given consent;
- organise emergency arrangements;
- keep records of visits, accidents or incident reports;
- review systems and monitor practice.

The **Group Leader** has overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit, including direct responsibility for the pupils' health, safety and welfare. The Group Leader will:

- be suitably competent and knowledgeable about the school and LA's policy and procedures;
- plan and prepare for the visit and assess the risks;
- define the roles and responsibilities of other staff and pupils and ensure effective supervision of what they do.

Adult volunteers who are not teachers at the school will:

- understand and agree expectations of them;
- understand their relationship to the pupils, teachers and visit leaders;
- recognise the limits of their responsibility;
- ensure that they are not left in sole charge of pupils unless this has been formally agreed through a risk assessment;
- follow instructions from teachers;
- raise concerns for pupil welfare with the Group Leader.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessments are made for all Educational Visits. This necessitates that the Group Leader, where possible, has made a pre-visit in order to be able to plan for the visit and to conduct a Risk Assessment appropriately. Risk Assessments must be simple, manageable, proportional, suitable and sufficient. The system will:

- identify significant hazards;
- assess the risk of harm;
- put control measures in place;
- check if anything else is needed;
- use a simple assessment language – high/medium/low.
- Risk Assessment considers the site and its environment, the group, the activity and the leaders.

Financing Educational Visits

The school complies with the Education Act 1996 (section 451), and procedure is outlined in the school's Charging policy.

Emergency Procedures

It is the responsibility of the EVC/Headteacher to ensure that emergency arrangements are in place for all Educational Visits. This includes:

- ensuring that all involved know who is the emergency contact point in the school, for each visit, and in the LA.
- having access to an emergency (Critical Incidents) plan appropriate to the visit;
- ensuring that the contact point – or rota – is effective throughout the visit;
- ensuring that parental contact information is up to date and accessible.