**Strabane Controlled Primary School**



**EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY**

Date approved by

Board of Governors: 3rd October 2017

Review Due: October 2020

Date approved by

Board of Governors:11th February 2020

Next Review Due: February 2022

Date approved by

Board of Governors: 3rd October 2017

Review Due: October 2020

Date approved by

Board of Governors: 3rd October 2017

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**STRABANE CONTROLLED PRIMARY**

**EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY**

Educational visits are all the academic, sporting, cultural, creative and personal development

activities organised by the school which take place away from school and make a significant

contribution to the learning and development of those taking part.

In this policy we seek to establish a clear, coherent structure for the planning and evaluation

of our off-site visits and to ensure that all risks are managed and kept to a minimum for the

safety and health of all pupils at all times. Within these limits we seek to make our visits

available to all pupils, and wherever possible to make them accessible to those with

disabilities.

**Aims**

The aims of our off-site visits are to:

* Enhance the curricular and recreational opportunities of our pupils
* Provide a wider range of experiences for our pupils than could be provided on the

school site alone

* Promote the independence of our children as learners and enable them to grow and

develop in new learning environments

These visits begin with short excursions in the local area in the Nursery Stage and progress to

a residential experience at the end of Key Stage 2.

**Authorising of Visits**

The Principal is the school’s “Educational Visit Coordinator” and will be involved in the

planning and management of all off-site visits. This includes ensuring:

* That risk assessments are completed
* The governors are notified about school visits
* The appointment of a “Group Leader” to be responsible for running the activity. This

will always be a teacher employed at the school

* Ensuring that all accompanying adults have been appropriately vetted
* Make sure that all necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained

Where staff are proposing to arrange an off-site activity, they must obtain the approval of the

Principal before any commitment is made on behalf of the school. Where a residential visit is

proposed, the approval of the Board of Governors is essential.

The Group Leader will have overall responsibility for the supervision, discipline and conduct

of the participants for the duration of the visit. A deputy group leader may also be appointed,

with the permission of the Principal, if it is thought appropriate.

It is our policy that all children should be able to participate in educational visits. Where a

child with a disability is eligible for a trip, we will make every effort to ensure that she/he is

included. We may seek guidance from parents to help us adapt our programme and we will

make reasonable adjustments to our itinerary to include a child with disabilities. Any such

adjustments will be included in the risk assessment.

**Risk Assessments**

A comprehensive risk assessment is carried out by the Group Leader and the Principal before

any proposed visit. It will assess the risks which might be encountered on the visit and will

include measures to prevent or reduce them. The risk assessment should be based on the

following considerations:

* What are the hazards?
* What is the risk factor?
* What safety measures are needed to reduce the risks to an acceptable level?
* Can the Group Leader put the safety measures in place?
* What steps will be taken in an emergency?

It is advisable for staff planning an off-site activity to make a preliminary visit to the venue in

order to carry out the risk assessment. Depending on the activity and time of year it may be

necessary to take into account the probable weather conditions. The Group Leader should

also take account of the facilities available particularly in regard to the size of the group and

should assess the sites suitability with regard to the age and particular needs of the children

(including special educational needs). They will also consider the venue’s own approach to

security and health and safety. Venues providing instructor led activities will have their own

risk assessments for particular sessions and these assessments may be adopted if it is

impractical for the Group Leader to experience the activity beforehand, or if she/he lacks the

skills required to make informed judgements about the risks that may be involved. All

activities will receive a risk assessment category (1-5) as set out in the “EA Educational Visits Interim Guidance for schools 2017’.

Categories 1 and 2 encompass all non-hazardous visits e.g.

swimming or theatre visits. Categories 3 -5 encompass all visits which involve either a

residential element or hazardous activities.

Any activity should have sufficient adults taking part to provide the following minimum ratios:

* Nursery 1 adult to 6 children
* Foundation Stage 1 adult to 10 children
* Key Stage 1 / 2 1 adult to 15 children

A risk assessment must also cover transport to and from the venue. We ensure that the coach

companies we use have appropriate health and safety measures in place including:

* The provision of seat belts for all passengers
* Appropriate vetting of the driver
* Proper insurance
* Details of first aid and emergency equipment
* Breakdown procedures

Where private cars are used for transport, the Group Leader is responsible for checking that the

insurance of each driver covers such journeys and that the drivers have been vetted.

A copy of all completed risk assessments will be kept by the Principal.

**Further Health and Safety Considerations**

All adults accompanying a party must be made aware by the party leader of the emergency

procedures which will apply. Each adult will be supplied with an emergency telephone

number (normally the number of the school). Where the activity extends beyond the normal

opening hours of the school, the home telephone number of the Principal should be provided.

Before a party leaves the school, the school office should be provided with a list of everyone,

children and adults, travelling with the party together with a timetable for the activity.

The safety of the party and especially the children is of paramount importance. During the

activity, the Group Leader must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that safety. This

includes taking note of all information provided by medical questionnaire returns and

ensuring that children are both safe and looked after well at all times.

Prior to an activity, if it is felt that the behaviour of an individual child is likely to

compromise the safety of themselves or others or compromise the good name of the school,

the school reserves the right to exclude the child from the activity.

The EA’s Accident Report Form or Incident Report Form will be used to record all

significant issues during off-site visits.

**Visit Planning**

Visit planning should include the following:

* Planning checklist
* Risk assessment
* General pupil information – names, ages, contact details, permission forms, medical records

and other relevant details of all those going on the visit

* Travel schedule
* Accommodation plan (if applicable)
* Full plan of activities
* Fire precautions and evacuation procedure (if applicable)
* Intended arrangements for supervision
* Insurance arrangements
* Emergency contacts and procedures
* General communication information
* First Aid boxes
* Medical questionnaires (if applicable)
* Post visit review (if applicable)

**Communication with Parents**

The parents of children taking part in any off-site activity should be provided with all

appropriate information about the intended visit. Parents must give their permission in

writing before a child can be involved in any off-site activity.

If there is to be a charge for any off-site activity, it will be in accord with the school’s

charging and remissions policy. Charges will be made clear to parents in the written

correspondence at the beginning of the planning stage.

All information gathered for the purposes of educational visits is covered by the provisions of

the Data Protection Act 1998/2018.

**Parent’s Responsibility**

In order to ensure that the activity is as safe and successful as possible, parents are expected to:

* Complete the consent form(s)
* Provide an emergency contact number
* Provide in writing all relevant medical/dietary details including medication currently being taken
* Provide any other relevant information which may affect their child’s participation in the visit including details about emotional, psychological and physical health
* Give advance permission for urgent medical treatment if this is judged to be necessary by medical authorities (residential trip)
* Help prepare their child for the visit including reinforcing the code of conduct

**Child’s Responsibility**

In order to ensure that the activity is as safe and successful as possible, each child is expected to:

* Act in accordance with the established code of conduct at all times
* Always think about their own and others’ safety
* If they get lost or separated, follow the procedures agreed for such an occurrence
* If they have a problem or are worried about something, always tell their teacher
* Follow the instructions of the Group Leader and other teachers and supervisors including those at the venue of the visit
* Follow the Green Cross code
* Dress and behave sensibly and responsibly at all times
* Respect the property of others
* Carry telephone money and details of the emergency numbers and address at all times

when on residential trips

* Be sensitive to local codes, customs and the environment
* Involve themselves fully in the planning role designated for them

**Code of Conduct for Staff**

All teachers and supervisors will abide by the school’s code of conduct for staff as set out in our Child Protection Policy. It should be noted that while on a residential, leaders remain responsible for the conduct and safety of the children 24 hours a day

**Emergency Procedures**

Emergency numbers will be established by the Group Leader for every visit and communicated to all members of the party. Procedures will include:

* Provision of adequate First Aid procedures and kit
* Emergency contact numbers for parents
* A ‘lost’ procedure for children
* Mobile phone contact and “Call Parent” texting and email service contact
* Contact numbers for Principal (24 hours a day)

Further guidance can be obtained from

* EA Educational Visits Interim Guidance for Schools 2017
* Child Protection Policy
* Health and Safety Policy
* Code of Conduct for Staff and pupils

This policy will be reviewed regularly.