

# **Roxeth Mead School**

## **Educational Visits Policy**

Pupils can derive a good deal of benefit from taking part in educational visits. In particular, they have the opportunity to undergo experiences not available in the classroom. Visits can enhance a pupil's understanding of curricular activities, develop investigative skills, and encourage greater independence and confidence.

Roxeth Mead School is committed to providing for all of its pupils a full and varied programme of educational visits. No amount of planning can guarantee that a visit will be totally incident-free; however, the school is committed to ensuring that the administration of all external visits is underpinned by a meticulous planning regime that pays particular regard to the school's duties under the Health and Safety legislation, both before and during the visit. This policy and attached procedures sets out the guidelines and expectations so that everyone involved can participate fully in educational visits in reasonable safety.

In formulating this policy we have considered current legislation and guidance from the Department of Education with particular reference to the guide *Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits*.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Health and Safety Policy and the Child Protection Policy. It incorporates the Every Child Matters outcomes: Enjoy and Achieve, Be healthy, Stay Safe.

### **Roles and responsibilities of the Directors, Head Teacher and Staff**

The Directors, under current Health and Safety at Work legislation, as employers are responsible for the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees. Employers are also under a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of anyone else on the premises or anyone who may be affected by their activities. This includes everyone involved in off-site visits (teachers, volunteers, helpers and pupils).

Although the employer is responsible for health and safety, decisions about visits are usually delegated to the Head Teacher.

The **Directors** will:

- Provide written guidelines (i.e. this document) for the Head Teacher and teachers
- Ensure that the visit has a specific and stated objective
- Satisfy themselves that risk assessments have been carried out, that appropriate safety measures are in place and that training needs have been met
- Ensure that the Head Teacher/Group Leader show how their plans comply with regulations and guidelines, including the School's health and safety and safeguarding children policies
- Ensure that the Head Teacher will report back after the visit
- Ensure that they are informed about less routine visits well in advance
- Assess proposals for less routine visits
- Where necessary, provide emergency telephone contact for the duration of the visit.

The **Head Teacher** will ensure:

- That visits comply with current legislation, regulations and procedures as set out in this document
- She informs, well in advance, the Directors about less routine visits
- That the Group Leader is competent to undertake and supervise any particularly hazardous or unusual activities and to monitor the risks throughout the visit.
- That Group Leaders are allowed sufficient time to organise visits properly
- That the Group Leader has experience in supervising the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively
- That the Group Leader has obtained signed parental consent for each pupil
- The risk assessment has been completed and appropriate safety measures are in place
- That the ratio of supervisors to pupils is appropriate
- That staff and volunteers comply with safeguarding and child protection procedures.
- That non-teacher supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise the children, and that they will be adequately supervised by the Group Leader
- There is adequate and relevant insurance cover
- She has the address and 'phone number of the visit's venue and contact name
- A point-of-contact within the school during the visit has been nominated and the group leader has the details
- Arrangements have been made for the medical and special educational needs of the pupils

- That there is adequate first-aid provision
- That the mode of travel is appropriate
- That travel times out and back are known including pick-up and drop-off points
- Adequate arrangements are in place for any necessary communications with parents during the visit
- The Group Leader, group supervisors and nominated school contact have the names of all the adults and pupils travelling in the group, and the contact details of parents and teachers' and other supervisors' next-of-kin
- That the Group Leader, supervisors and nominated school contact are conversant with the agreed emergency procedures
- There is a contingency plan for any delays including a late-return home
- That she assesses the feedback contained in the post-visit report.

Members of staff as employees of the Directors of Roxeth Mead School should and be aware of their obligations regarding Health and Safety legislation and must:

- Take reasonable care of their own and others' health and safety
  - Co-operate with their employers over safety matters
  - Carry out activities in accordance with training and instructions
  - Inform the employer of any serious risks

These duties apply to all school visits. Teachers and other staff in charge of pupils also have a common law duty to act as any reasonably prudent parent would do in the same circumstances

One teacher, the **Group Leader**, will:

- Have been approved by the Head Teacher or Directors
- Have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit and will have regard to the health and safety of the group
- Be responsible for the behaviour and discipline of pupils during the visit
- Obtain the Head Teacher's prior agreement before any off-site visit takes place
- Follow the Directors' regulations, guidelines and policies
- Undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including transportation requirements and the briefing of group members and parents
- Undertake a complete and comprehensive risk assessment, ensuring that vetting procedures have been followed.
- Be aware of child protection issues

- Review regularly undertaken visits/activities and advise the Head Teacher where adjustments may be necessary
- Appoint a deputy
- Define clearly each group supervisor's role and ensure that all tasks have been assigned
- Prepare pupils, staff and volunteers in advance of the visit, ensuring that they are aware of what the visit entails. This includes preparation for any medical or special needs
- Ensure that there is adequate first aid provision; for outings involving children from the Early Years Foundation setting, at least one person has a current paediatric first aid certificate
- Ensure that the ratio of supervisors to pupils is appropriate for the needs of the group
- Be aware of the School policy on Promoting Good Behaviour and make accompanying adults, the pupils and their parents aware of the standards of behaviour expected during the visit
- Ensure that there are contingency arrangements in the event of unfavourable weather conditions, transport breakdown or other failure
- Consider stopping the visit if the risk to health or safety of the pupils is unacceptable and have in place procedures for such an eventuality
- Be aware of insurance procedures
- Will carry emergency telephone numbers and details of points of contact
- Communicate with the Parents during the visit, directly or via the school
- Ensure that group supervisors have details of the school contact and a copy of the emergency procedures

**Teachers** will do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances. They will:

- Follow the instructions of the group leader and help with control and discipline
- Consider stopping the visit and will notify the group leader if they think the risk to health and safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable

### **Adult Volunteers**

Non-teacher adults acting as supervisors will:

- Do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group
- Not to be left in sole charge of pupils except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment
- Follow the instruction of the group leader and teacher supervisors and help with control, behaviour and discipline
- Speak to the Group Leader or teacher supervisors if concerned about the health or safety of pupils at any time during the visit
- Be aware of potential conflicts of interest if their own children are members of the group and discuss this beforehand

### **Responsibilities of Pupils**

The Group Leader will make it clear to pupils that they must:

- Not take unnecessary risks
- Follow the instructions of the leader and other supervisors including those at the venue of the visit
- Behave sensibly and responsibly, using safety equipment as instructed
- Look out for anything that might hurt or threaten themselves or others in the group and tell the Group Leader or supervisor about it

Any pupils whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or others may be stopped from going on the visit

**Parents** will be given by the Group Leader sufficient information in writing so they are able to make an informed decision on whether their child should go on the visit.

Parents are requested to help, from the information provided by the school, prepare their child for the visit by assisting with the following:

- Reinforcing the school's expectations regarding pupil behaviour
- Providing the packed lunch, clothing, footwear and any other equipment that may be required for the visit

Parents will be expected to contribute to the success of the visit by:

- Understanding the objectives of the visit
- Giving written permission promptly for their child to take part in the visit
- Giving written consent to transport arrangements
- Giving written consent to all emergency and other medical or dental treatment necessary for the safety and well-being of the pupil

- Providing clear information on their child's health and any special needs
- Providing the Group Leader with emergency contact arrangements

### **Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation**

The Head Teacher will report on a termly basis to the Directors. The report will address any hazards and risks that were identified in the post visit debriefing and the steps taken to minimise or eliminate them in the planning of future educational visits. The Directors will evaluate those outcomes and will consider whether any further action should be recommended.

## **Procedures for Planning and taking Pupils on an Educational Visit**

A Risk Assessment is an essential part of planning for visits and fulfilling health and safety responsibilities.

It will be completed well in advance of the visit, and will be approved by the Head Teacher

The risk assessment need not be complex, but it should be comprehensive and should be based on the following considerations:

- Identify the hazards
- Decide who might be harmed
- Identify control measures which would reduce the risk
- Record the finding

Risk assessments for educational visits have three levels:

- Generic activity risk assessments which will apply to the activity wherever and whenever it takes place
- Visits/site specific risk assessments which will differ from place to place and group to group. They will be undertaken by the Group Leader for each venue and amended as necessary to suit the needs for different groups
- Ongoing risk assessments and reassessments- it is not possible to foresee every detail of a visit and Group Leaders and other responsible adults must continue to assess and reassess risks while the visit is taking place

*See attached sample risk assessment and forms.*

Before booking a visit the Group Leader should obtain written documentary assurance that the venue providers have assessed the risks and have appropriate safety measures in place.

The Group Leader will take the following factors into consideration when assessing the risks:

- The type of visit and the level at which it is being undertaken
- The location, routes and mode of transport

- The competence, experience and qualifications of staff and volunteers
- The ratio of teachers and supervisory staff to pupils
- The pupils' ages, competence and suitability for the visit
- The special educational or medical needs of pupils
- Seasonal conditions and weather
- Emergency procedures
- The need to monitor risks throughout the visit

An **exploratory visit** will be undertaken by the Group Leader whenever possible, to:

- Ensure at first hand that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit
- Obtain names and addresses of other schools who have used the venue
- Obtain advice from the manager
- Assess potential areas of risk
- Ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the pupils and staff in the group
- Become familiar with the area before taking a group

With a venue that is visited annually it should be reassessed from time to time to take into account any changes that have been made since the last visit.

The planning of **Transport Arrangements** must be given careful consideration in relation to the following:

- Type of journey, journey time and distance
- Passenger safety
- The Group Leader is responsible for ensuring that transport is hired from a reputable company and that it is suitable for the nature of the visit. The preferred firm is **Hearns (020 8954 0444/5444)**. When booking the Group Leader will ensure that the operator has appropriate insurance, a PSV licence, and that seat belts are fitted in the vehicle.
- The competence and training of the driver
- The number of driving hours
- Traffic conditions
- Contingency in case of breakdown

The Group Leader will ensure that there is the correct **ratio** of adult supervisors to pupils. Subject to any special considerations by the Group Leader, supervision by age will be as follows (minimum):



- Early Years Foundation Stage - 1:4
- Years 1 and 2 – 1:6

Where outings involve children from the Early Years Setting, staff, volunteers or students under the age of 17 do not count towards the ratio and will be supervised at all times.

The ratio of staff to pupils should be adequate to cope effectively in the case of an emergency.

**Volunteer** supervisors will be selected carefully and will never be left in sole charge of pupils.

For the protection of both pupils and adults, all supervisors should ensure that they are not alone with a pupil whenever possible.

**Supervisors must understand their roles and responsibilities at all times.** This will be put in writing. Supervisors must be particularly aware of any pupil who may require closer supervision. Teachers are responsible for the group at all times.

The Group Leader will ensure that the supervisors are aware of the importance of **accounting for individual pupils**

Head Counts will be done at regular intervals during the visit especially before leaving the venue.

Pupils should be dressed in easily identifiable clothing such as school uniform

The Group Leader will identify and establish meeting points at set times

Instructions will be given to the pupils regarding what they should do if they become separated from the group.

**The supervision of pupils on transport** will follow basic safety rules which include:

- Waiting for transport in a safe place
- Pupils to board the coach in an orderly fashion
- Everybody wearing a seat belt whilst travelling on the coach
- Placing bags and clothing in the overhead storage so that aisles are not blocked
- Children to sit at all times, never kneeling or standing on seats
- Not distracting or disturbing the driver
- Never attempting to get on or off moving transport
- Not tampering with the vehicle's equipment or controls
- Standing clear of doors after boarding or leaving transport
- When leaving the vehicle ensure that it has moved off before attempting to cross the road. Pedestrian crossings and footbridges should be used whenever possible.

All pupils will be instructed in the above safety rules and the Group Leader will ensure that pupils know how to observe the safety rules set out in the Green Cross Code.

The Group Leader is responsible for maintaining good discipline and will give instructions to the pupils regarding behaviour and discipline as misbehaviour is a main cause of accident when travelling.

**First Aid** will form part of the risk assessment. The Group Leader will have a good working knowledge of first aid and will ensure that someone in the group is also trained in paediatric first aid. Consideration will be taken to the numbers in the group, the nature of the activity and the distance to the nearest hospital.

An adequate first aid kit will be taken and will include:

- A leaflet giving general advice on first aid
- Six individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressings
- One large sterile unmedicated wound dressing approx. 18cmx18cm
- Two triangular bandages
- Two safety pins
- Individually wrapped moist cleansing wipes
- One pair of disposable gloves
- A resuscitator

All pupils will be asked to tell a teacher or supervisor if they feel unwell.

All teachers supervising visits should be aware of a pupil's medical needs and any medical emergency procedures. **Medical information** will be obtained from the school medical form that has been supplied by the parents. The medical forms will contain the following information:

- Details of medical conditions
- Emergency contact numbers
- The child's GP's name, address and telephone number
- Written details of any medication required and parental permission to administer
- Information on allergies
- Whether the pupil suffers from travel sickness

The group Leader will check that the insurance policy covers staff and pupils with pre-existing medical needs.

### **Emergency Procedures**

The Group Leader will take charge in an emergency and will ensure that emergency procedures are in place and that back up cover is arranged.

The Group Leader will:

- Establish the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible
- Ensure that all the group are safe and looked after
- Establish the names of any casualties and to get immediate medical attention for them
- Ensure that all group members who need to know are aware of the incident and that all group members are following the emergency procedures
- Ensure that a teacher accompanies casualties to hospital and that the rest of the group are adequately supervised at all times and kept together
- Notify the police if necessary
- Inform the school contact. The school contact number should be accessible at all times during the visit
- Pass on to the school the details of the incident: date and time, location; names of casualties and details of injuries; names of others involved so that parents can be reassured; action taken so far; action yet to be taken and by whom
- Notify the insurers
- Write down accurately and as soon as possible all relevant facts and witness details and preserve any vital evidence
- Keep a written account of all events, times and contacts after the incident
- Complete an accident report form as soon as possible.
- Ensure that no-one in the group speaks to the Media. Names of those involved will not be released as this will cause distress to the families. Media Enquiries should be referred to the Chairman of the Board of Directors and Head Teacher
- Ensure that no-one in the group will discuss legal liability with other parties.

Prior to the visit the Group Leader will identify a school contact who will deal with any issues arising from an emergency from a school base.

The School Contact will:

- Ensure that the Group Leader is in control of the emergency and will establish if any assistance is required from the school base.
- Act as the link between the group and parents and will have available all the details and contact numbers of the parents. Parents will be kept as well informed as possible at all stages of the emergency
- Act as a link with the Chairman of the Board of Directors and arrange for the group to receive assistance if necessary
- Liaise with the designated media contact appointed by the Directors and Head Teacher as soon as possible

The Directors and Head Teacher will judge whether any pupils who witness a serious incident should have professional advice to cope with the effects of the accident.

### **Insurance**

The Group Leader will ensure that adequate insurance arrangements are in place. The following types of insurance may be appropriate:

- Employers liability
- Public liability
- Personal accident cover for teachers, other adults and pupils

### **Parental Consent and Information**

This will be obtained by the Head Teacher. A parental consent form should be completed for each child in the group. Without parental consent the pupil will not be taken on the Educational visit.

The parents will be expected to provide emergency contact and alternative contact numbers and give permission for emergency medical treatment including anaesthetic or blood transfusion.

Information given to the parents should include the following:

- Date of the visit
- Visit's objectives
- Times of departures and returns
- Mode of transport and travel
- The size of group and the level of supervision
- Details of provision for special educational and medical needs
- Names of the Group Leader and other accompanying adults
- Details of activities and how assessed risks will be managed
- Standards of behaviour expected from the pupils
- What pupils should or should not take on the visit
- A request to the parents to inform the staff if their child suffers from travel sickness and whether they will be giving their child travel sickness medication.

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