

# **HEMDEAN HOUSE SCHOOL**



## **POLICY ON SAFETY OF CHILDREN ON EDUCATIONAL VISITS**

**Updated      May 2014**

**Review Due   Summer 2017**

The purpose of this policy and the guidance derived from it is to promote good practice and ensure that students benefit from a wide range of high quality, safe Educational Visits and Learning Outside the Classroom opportunities.

This policy aims to ensure that the school fulfils its responsibilities as described in the above document and is meeting good practice standards laid down in other guidance issued from time to time by the UK Government, by the Health and Safety Executive.

### **Benefits of Educational Visits**

Educational Visits and Learning Outside the Classroom activities bring great benefits which contribute to all five key outcomes for children and young people; being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being. Whether the emphasis is adventurous, academic, sporting, cultural, spiritual or creative, Educational Visits and outdoor education provide first-hand experiences that inspire and enhance learning and development in ways which are powerful and lasting. They provide a foundation for life-long learning and healthy lifestyles, as well as complementing classroom learning and enriching the curriculum. The school will endeavour to give all children the opportunity to participate in a wide range of educational visits and learning outside the classroom activities.

### **Managing Risk**

Risk is a natural part of everyday life: all activities involve risk, and it is impossible to entirely eliminate it. Indeed, the human spirit thrives on adventure and journeys into new territory, both physical and metaphorical. As children and young people grow up, it is important that they learn to understand and manage risk and uncertainty for themselves. If we attempt to protect them from all risk, they not only miss great opportunities for growth but also emerge into society unable to cope with the uncertainties and challenges of adult life. Well-managed Educational Visits and Learning Outside the Classroom, including outdoor and adventurous activities, play a vital part in helping children and young people to learn about the real world, and to understand and manage risks for themselves.

The school believes that the best approach to safety management of educational visits is to plan and implement control measures which reduce risks to an acceptable level when weighed against the potential benefits of such visits. Staff are required not just to assess the risks of an activity, but also to assess the benefits that will be gained by the children and young people taking part in that activity. Although recording of information and lines of accountability are required, risk management should also be a common-sense process, centred upon competent staff. It should focus on significant risks, not trivial ones, and it should not become a restrictive and onerous bureaucratic exercise. Employees who follow the guidance available, who work within the limits of their own competence, and use their common sense and professional judgement will be fully supported by the school.

### **Inclusion & equality**

Educational Visits should be available to all children, regardless of background or abilities. The school aims that the provision offered meets equal opportunities requirements and the requirements of the Disabilities Discrimination Act 1995 and the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Act 2001.

### **Safeguarding**

The planning and preparation of Educational Visits must include measures to safeguard children and accompanying adults from harm. Those responsible for planning educational visits can ensure these

safeguarding measures are fulfilled by following the guidance available.

## **Definition of roles**

### **The School Council (Governing Body) will:**

- Ensure that trips are planned with regard to the DfES document “The Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits”;
- Agree with the Headteacher the types of visit the Council should be informed about;
- Ensure that the visit’s educational objectives are clear;

### **The Senior Management Team will:**

- Support the Headteacher and the Council with decisions relating to visits;
- Assign competent teachers to lead visits (Group Leader), bearing in mind that discipline on an educational visit may, at times, have to be stricter than in the classroom;
- Assist the Group Leader in applying the good practice described in the DfES guide, Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits;
- Assist with the training of adults going on a visit, e.g. first aid, awareness of hazards and risk assessments;
- Check that the necessary DBS checks are in place;
- Ensure that letters informing parents of educational visits contain sufficient information;
- Ensure that emergency arrangements are in place, including a contingency plan, covering staff illness, changes of activity, etc;
- Keep records of visits, including any reports of accidents or near accidents.

### **The SMT will:**

- Approve visits at school level, or refer to the School Council any substantially different, new proposed visits;
- Inform the School Council of approved visits taking place;
- Ensure that educational objectives are in place;
- Ensure that any issues identified have been resolved within the risk assessment;
- Ensure that visits are evaluated to inform the planning of future visits;
- Arrange for the reporting of injuries and the recording of accidents, as required;
- Act as the emergency school contact and be contactable for the full duration of the visit 24 hours a day;
- Ensure that parents are made aware of the importance of providing their own emergency contact numbers;
- Establish a procedure to ensure that parents are informed quickly about incident details rather than through the media.

**The Group Leader will:**

- Take overall responsibility for the planning and supervision of the visit and should have regard to the health and safety of the group, in particular being aware of child protection issues and ensuring that adequate first aid provision is available;
- Follow school guidelines and policies;
- Assign all pupils to a group supervisor;
- Be competent both to lead pupils of the relevant age range and to instruct pupils in any relevant activity;
- Undertake the planning and preparation of the visit, including briefing parents and group members;
- Undertake a comprehensive risk assessment
- Ensure that information is available about pupils' special educational or medical needs, as necessary.

**Pupils will be informed that they must:**

- Not take unnecessary risks;
- Follow the instructions of the leader or other supervisors, including those at the venue concerned;
- Dress and behave sensibly and responsibly;
- Be sensitive to local codes and customs, if abroad;
- Have regard to their safety and that of others in the group, reporting any concerns to the group leader or supervisor.

**Parents will:**

- Be asked to reinforce the required code of conduct;
- Agree the arrangements for sending a pupil home early and to pay the cost of this;
- Provide the group leader with emergency contact numbers;
- Sign the consent form;
- Give information about their child's emotional and physical health which might be relevant to the visit.

**PLANNING SCHOOL TRIPS**

**Stage 1:** Consider a proposal for a visit in the preceding year/term, depending on the nature of the visit. This should include the objectives, likely dates, pupils, staffing, resources and an estimate of the cost.

**Stage 2:** Contact the proposed venue to check on its suitability for the target group and the costs. Find out about supervisors/guides provided by the venue. Check available dates.

**Stage 3:** Give outline proposal to / Headteacher / School Council seeking approval in principle. Complete a risk assessment. Use the form in Appendix A.

**Stage 4:** Once approval is given the visit details go into the school calendar. Information is exchanged with parents by letter for a day trip or through a briefing meeting for a residential visit or a visit abroad.

**Stage 5:** Parents pay deposits / full payments. Supervisors and pupils are fully briefed on visit arrangements and expected behaviour.

**Go on the visit, monitoring the risks at all times.  
Evaluate the visit.**

**A Summary Policy on Educational Visits exists as Appendix F in the Health and Safety Policy. It is included here for convenience.**

“When planning an educational visit, the following details will need to be determined:

- Destination
- Purpose of trip
- Party leader
- Other staff accompanying
- Parents/other helpers accompanying (have they had CRB checks if they are to be unsupervised with children?)
- Is a someone with first aid training able to go? Take first aid kit.
- Number and age of pupils going
- Form of transport (seatbelts)
- Date and time of departure
- Date (if different) and Estimated return time
- Hazardous activities
- Insurance information
- Estimated cost per pupil

The Headteacher will need all of the above information in order to authorise the visit.

All new types of visit and visits to new locations must be approved by the School Council and therefore must be planned sufficiently in advance to allow for this.

Parents/carers should also be given the above information, by letter for a day visit, but, at a meeting for a residential visit.

Parents/carers must sign a consent form on which they should provide:

- Emergency contact number
- Special dietary needs of their child
- Medical needs of child
- Permission for their child to receive any necessary emergency treatment;

These forms must be taken on the trip by the teacher in charge.

In addition parents will need to know clothing requirements (e.g. should school uniform be worn, items needed to be packed), food provision (e.g. is a packed lunch required?) and whether pocket money should be taken.

The safety of pupils travelling by hired coaches is the responsibility of the driver. Adults supervising pupils on coaches must ensure that the driver's concentration is not impeded in any way and must follow any instructions given by the driver regarding the safety of the passengers.

Adults who transport pupils in their own private vehicles must ensure that their insurance provides suitable cover for such passengers and that all conditions under which such cover is provided are strictly adhered to."

**Brief guidelines for members of staff planning educational visits are given in the Staff Handbook. They are included here for convenience.**

**"1 Trip preparation**

**A teacher planning an educational visit should consult with the Educational Visits Coordinator and have regard to the "Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits" guide from the DfES.**

- a) Proposed trips should first be sanctioned by the Head before being publicised. A risk assessment should be carried out, involving the ratio of adults to children, the activities to be participated in and the means of transport.
- b) All trips should be totally self-financing. The costing of trips should include entrance fees, coach hire, free places for teachers & helpers, tip for coach driver, telephone calls and postage, any relevant incidentals. Per capita charges should be kept to a minimum and passed to the Office for checking and clearance before notification to parents.
- c) Preferably trips should be planned by the beginning of the term in which they are to take place so that they can be included in the *Diary* which goes out to parents in the first week of term. Trip forms should be sent home via the children at least two weeks before the trip, and preferably earlier, with details about cost, packed lunches, clothing and footwear, spending money etc. Trips involving accommodation will require a longer period for planning and notification to parents.
- d) Ratio of adults to children should be at least 1:10 for the seniors and juniors, and 1:5 for the infants and the Nursery. Parents can be invited to make up adult numbers if teachers wish, but should be selected for their organisational and pastoral ability.
- e) Trips should be selected for their educational value to the pupils, and, where possible, related to curriculum content for that age group. Preparation should be done in class before the trip so that maximum benefit is derived on the day, or over a longer period in the case of the *PGL Adventure Weekend* or foreign trips.
- f) Parents must sign an appropriate form for trips involving an overnight stay.

**2. The Trip Day**

- a) On the coach teachers should not sit all together at the front, but should space themselves out along the length of the coach, sitting among the children to monitor behaviour.

- b) Children should be split into groups, each in the charge of an adult for the duration of the day. Each adult will be responsible for the behaviour, well-being and organisation of the children in his/her group(s) during the day.
- c) Wherever possible pupils should have something to do as well as to see during the day , e.g. details of information to be collected, things to be recorded, and things observed. Paper, pencils etc. should be available.
- d) If a coach is going to be back more than ½ hour later than its estimated time, the organising teacher should telephone school as soon as this is known, so that collecting parents etc can be informed as soon as possible.

**3. Follow-up work**

Trips should be followed by class work if possible, and information, photographs etc. should be displayed if appropriate.”