

Educational Visits Policy

SAINT JOSEPH'S



NURSERY SCHOOL

Saint Joseph's Nursery
52 Greystone Road,
Antrim

Policy on Educational trips/outings

Rationale

It is the policy of our school to take children on visits/trips to places of interest, which extend and stimulate teaching and learning and help to enrich the curriculum by providing additional memorable experiences and rich opportunities which would otherwise be impossible e.g. visits to local library, farm, Castle grounds, Greenmount, residential to Corrymeela etc. Visits are linked to current themes to enable the children to make relevant connections in their learning.

The term Educational visits according to the Educational Authority refers to:

“all academic, sporting, cultural, creative and personal development activities, which take place away from the young persons’ school, and make a significant contribution to learning and development of those participating”.

Staff aim to have clear and effective procedures in place for off-site visits to ensure that any risks are managed and kept to a minimum, for the health and safety of all children at all times. Within these limits we seek to make our visits inclusive and available to all pupils wherever possible.

Our aim is that off-site visits will enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our children. Visits will promote the independence of our children as learners and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.

Risk assessment

All off-site activities will take place in accordance with the Education Authority's instructions.

A comprehensive risk assessment is carried out by the Principal before the visit/residential. It will assess the risks which might be encountered on the visit and will indicate measures to prevent or reduce them. Consideration will be given to:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures are needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

Consideration will also be given to the weather conditions at the time of year in relation to the proposed trip. The Principal will consider the facilities available with due regard to the proposed size of the group. The site's suitability, security, health and safety with regard to the age and any particular needs of the children will also be considered.

Carrying out a risk assessment:

The Principal will carry out a risk assessment prior to the visit. First aid equipment will be taken on the trip. Parents/carers will be asked to give their consent in advance of such outings. Parents/ carers will also be given the opportunity to accompany their child/children on the trip.

The Principal and staff are involved in the planning and management of off-site visits. The Principal will:

- ensure that risk assessments are completed;
- assign competent staff to lead and help with trips;
- make sure that all necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained;
- keep records of visits and complete relevant educational visit forms (Appendix 1, 2 &3)
- provide staff training (when applicable)

Participation in educational visits

It is the policy of Saint Joseph's Nursery that all children will be able to participate in educational visits. Where a child has a medical, disability, behavioural or other additional problem and is planning to take part in the trip, every effort will be made to ensure that s/he is included. Guidance and additional support may be sought from the parent/s to help adapt the arrangements for the trip and so any reasonable adjustments to the itinerary can be made to ensure the child/children can be included. Any such adjustments will be included in the risk assessment.

Communication with parents

The parents of children taking part in an off-site activity will be provided with all appropriate information about the visit/residential. Parents will be required to give their permission before a child can be involved in any off-site activities. This is normally done during the our induction process.

Health and safety

The Principal/leader will inform all adults (including parental volunteers) accompanying a group of the emergency procedures which will apply. A copy of the risk assessment will also be made available.

The safety of the party, and especially the children, is of paramount importance. During the activity the principal/leader will take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that safety. This involves taking note of any information provided by parents when completing consent forms to ensure children are both safe and well looked after at all times.

Procedure for Trip/Visit

When planning educational visits, the following must be in place:

- educational objectives of visit
- arrangements for supervision; EA suggested starting supervision ratio's are 'one adult for up to a maximum of six young people'. Additionally, parents will be encouraged to join with us on school trips with an aim to have: *1 adult: 2 children*.
- travel schedule;
- plan of activities;
- risk assessment;
- general information, communications information.
- medical equipment - e.g first-aid boxes, inhalers, Epi-pens if needed, and individual prescribed medicines.
- Additional clothing for children who may have intimate care needs.

Operational procedures

All staff, volunteers and students involved in off-site visits will be expected to provide the same standard of care and interaction with the children. The staff's main responsibility is to ensure the safety of the children, however this is balanced by ensuring children maximise the opportunity to experience and explore new environments, to socialise and have fun.

Procedures when a child is lost

In general, if all preschool policies and procedures are being implemented the likelihood of a child being lost is small. Through careful planning and co-operative working amongst staff, children should not be out of sight of an adult during an outing. Staff are advised to regularly account for all children in their group throughout the length of the trip.

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff on the trip will ask children to stand with their class teachers/parent or guardian and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child/children have gone astray.
- The staff member will alert the Principal (Designated Teacher); class teacher (Deputy Designated Teacher) or senior member of staff leading trip. One or two members of staff (depending on size of group) will carry out a thorough search of the immediate vicinity.
- The incident will be reported to the Police. The incident will be recorded.
- The Principal will contact the parent, who will make their way to the school.
- The staff will contact the venue's security who will continue to handle the search.
- Staff will take the remaining children back to the school.
- The Designated Teacher or Deputy Designated Teacher will contact the Mr Raymond Flanagan, Chairman of the Board of Governors. The nursery will immediately carry out an investigation, with the Governors where appropriate.
- The Senior member of staff on the trip may be advised by the Police to remain at the venue until they arrive.
- Further guidance - see Missing Child Policy

Summary guidance and procedure for all off-site activities

- Staff must carry out risk assessments prior to the outing / trip.
- Written permission will be sought for all trips.
- A First Aid kit, change of clothes, additional medical/personal equipment must be carried by a member of staff.
- A list of parent contact details must be carried by the lead member of staff
- A mobile phone must be carried by a member of staff.
- Staff must wear staff badges and/or high vis vests if visiting a public place.
- Agreed staffing/pupil ratios must be maintained. EA's suggested starting supervision ratio's are *'one adult for up to a maximum of six young people'*. Additionally, parents will be encouraged to join with us on school trips with an aim to have: *1 adult: 2 children*.
- Parents who accompany the children must be on the school's register of volunteers and are vetted in accordance to the school's Child Protection Policy.
- The children must be counted before setting off (on the coach if used) and counting must be ongoing at regular intervals throughout the outing. If the group is broken up into sub-groups a designated person in charge must be assigned and that person is responsible for counting the children at regular intervals.
- Toilet facilities must be provided for the children at regular intervals.
- Where possible, food and drinks must be provided at similar times to those in school and additional drinks should be offered if the weather is warm or if energetic exercise is part of the day's activities.
- Meeting points must be pre-designated and times arranged when all the group should assemble. These must be strictly adhered to.
- Transport must be fully insured and on the EA's list of authorized carriers. The maximum seat capacity of the vehicle must not be exceeded. Seat belts must be worn.

Teacher's Checklist

1. All volunteers/parents are vetted in line with Child Protection Policy (if applicable)
2. Consent forms have been filled for each individual child
3. Parents /volunteers accompanying are aware of procedures /itinerary
4. Appropriate clothing is worn / footwear/ lunch backpack provided
5. Children are reminded of acceptable behaviour
 - They must stay in their group
 - Encourage conservation- never leave litter
 - Be aware of the dangers water etc.
 - Sit properly on the bus/ train
6. Ensure all children have been toileted.
7. Bring any additional medical, personal equipment needed.

Remember to bring:

- Name lists/ Contact Numbers
- Mobile phone
- Number/list/names of children and adults going on trip
- First Aid Kit
- Camera/ipad
- Tissues/Wipes
- Pen
- Change of clothes
- Medical/personal equipment
- Payment for entrance fees

When planning and taking part in a school trip staff will refer to the EA's '**EDUCATIONAL VISITS: Interim Guidance for Schools 2017**' including Educational Visits forms and appendices - Policy, Practice and Procedures which is available in school. Relevant recommended forms will also be completed before the trip takes place.

Appendix 1

CATEGORIES OF EDUCATIONAL VISITS

Category 1

Visits which take place on a regular basis. (Non hazardous) and occur largely within establishment hours e.g. sporting fixtures, swimming pool visits and outings

Category 2

One-off day /evening excursions (Non hazardous) e.g. field study trips, theatre visits, business/education visits, regional sporting fixtures

Category 3

Residential visits of one or more nights within the UK or Ireland. (Non hazardous) e.g. visits to residential centres, field centres, youth and school exchanges, and award bearing schemes (Duke of Edinburgh)

Category 4

Residential visits outside the UK or Ireland (Non hazardous) e.g. international exchange visits, sporting events, cultural activities and international community work

Category 5

Hazardous Activities - residential and non-residential as exemplified below: Hill walking Fieldwork Cycling/ mountain biking Orienteering Rock climbing/abseiling Caving and potholing Kayaking Open canoeing Windsurfing Dingy sailing Sub-aqua Skiing/ Snowboarding Horse riding Angling Waterskiing Rafting Rowing Surfing Bouldering/ Gorge walking Swimming in open water

Appendix 2 & 3

EDUCATIONAL VISITS FORMS

Appendix 2

<https://www.eani.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-10/EA%20Educational%20Visits%20Forms%20%28Word%20document%20for%20schools%20personalisation%29.docx>

Forms

- Educational visit Proposal form (completed for visits in categories 3, 4 and 5)
- Educational Visit Approval Form (completed for visits in categories 1 and 2 only)
- Planning Checklist form
- Consent Form
- Educational Visit Group Details Form
- Educational Visit Incident Record Form
- Post Visit Review Form

Appendices

<https://www.eani.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-10/EA%20Educational%20Visits%20Forms%20and%20Appendices.pdf>

- Appendix 1 - Risk Management
- Appendix 1a - Sample risk management
- Appendix 1b - Behavioural Risk Assessment and Risk Management Plan
- Appendix 2 - Emergency Procedures
- Appendix 3 - First-Aid Kits
- Appendix 4 - What should we do about visits given the current threat of terrorist attacks?
- Appendix 5 - Model code of conduct for pupils
- Appendix 6 - Model code of conduct for all leaders, staff and supervisors
- Appendix 7 - Areas to be addressed during briefing of leaders, pupils and parents prior to visit

Monitoring and evaluation

This policy will be reviewed and monitored in line with the school's policy review schedule.