

CLOUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY UNIT



EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

Signed:

Date:

This policy was adapted May 2023

Review Date: June 2026

Introduction

This policy covers all educational visits that occur outside the school premises. The purpose of the Policy is to: -

- Provide guidelines to help minimise risks to staff and pupils.

- Provide parents with reassurance that the safety and health of pupils is one of the priority of our school.

- Enable the school to consider legal requirements in relation to best practice.

- Ensure that each trip or activity has clear aims and objectives.

- Identify the relationship of trips and other activities to the curriculum.

- Clarify agreed procedures and lines of responsibility.

- Consider risk assessment.

Aims and Objectives for Educational Visits

Our fundamental aim at Clough Primary School and Nursery Unit 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. In doing this, we aim therefore, to raise the achievement of all the children in the school.

Educational visits, outdoor and adventurous activities are an integral part of the children's education at Clough Primary School and Nursery unit. They offer opportunities to enrich the curriculum, enabling the children to have first-hand experience of a wide range of topics and activities. On residential visits especially, there is 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: -

- Half day and full day visits by coach to places of historical, environmental, cultural or other interest to support specific curriculum areas.

- An annual two or three-night residential educational trip for P7 pupils.

Health & Safety

The school follows the 'Educational Visits- Best Practice Guidance 2009' guidance issued by the Education Authority.

Personnel

The school's Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is the Principal, Mr Hutchinson, who has responsibility to ensure that each trip is following the guidelines laid out in this policy. For each visit, of whatever duration, a Group Leader is identified. In addition, the role of the Board of Governors is outlined within the 'Standards for LEAs in overseeing Educational Visits' guidance issued by Education Authority.

The Board of Governors is responsible for: -

- ensuring that guidance is available to inform the school policy, practices and procedures relating to the health & safety of pupils on educational visits;
- ensuring that the Principal, is supported in matters relating to educational visits and that he has the appropriate time and expertise to fulfil his responsibilities;
- asking questions about a visit's educational objectives and how they will be met;
- ensuring that the Principal 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 Principal on a two-year basis.

The function of the EVC is to: -

- ensure educational visits meet the Department Education Northern Ireland and school's requirements;
- support the Governors with approval and other decisions;
- assess the competence of prospective leaders and staff;
- ensure that the Risk Assessment is undertaken for each visit;
- 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 Principal is also responsible for: -

- ensuring approval for visits is given, including liaising with the Education Authority where appropriate;
- ensuring that the Board of Governors is made aware of visits;
- ensuring that arrangements are in place for the educational objectives of a visit to be inclusive;
- being aware of the need for 'Best Value';
- ensuring that all accreditation or verification of providers has been met;
- ensuring that visits are evaluated to inform the operation of future visits;
- ensuring that each visit has an appropriately competent Group Leader;
- ensuring that all teachers are aware of the Education Authority guidance;

- ensuring that the school has an emergency procedure in case of a major incident, which has been discussed and reviewed by staff. This emergency procedure must include getting support from the Education Authorities public relations unit. See also the school's 'Critical Incidents Procedures'.

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 must: -

- be approved to carry out the visit, suitably competent and knowledgeable about the school and Education Authority policy and procedures;
- plan and prepare for the visit and assess the risks;
- ensure the appropriate ratio of pupils is appropriate to age and the activity of pupils;
- define the roles and responsibilities of other staff and pupils and ensure effective supervision of what they do.
- carry a mobile phone with relevant contact numbers available
- ensure high-visibility vests are worn where necessary for pupils' safety.

Adult volunteers who are not teachers at the school must: -

- 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.

Parents must: -

- provide the group leader with emergency contact number(s);
- sign the consent form;
- give the group leader relevant information about their child's health and dietary requirements which might be relevant to the visit.

Procedure for Running Educational Visits

A set procedure is followed for all Educational Visits, although the nature of each visit will determine the level of preparation required. Each Group Leader will, in liaison with the EVC, complete the Educational Visits Checklist (attached).

A visit will proceed only when the EVC is satisfied that all reasonable preparations have been made.

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment should always be carried out before setting off on a visit, using Clough's Risk Assessment Evaluation Form. The risk assessment should include the following considerations: -

- what are the risks?
- who is affected by them?
- what safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- can the group leader guarantee that these safety measures will be provided?
- what steps will be taken in an emergency?
- what is the acceptable ratio of adults to children for this visit? (See section on supervision.) The group leader and other supervisors should continually reassess the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action if pupils are in danger.

The group leader should take the following factors into consideration when assessing the risks: -

- the type of activity and the level at which it is being undertaken;
- the location;
- the competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff;
- the group members' age, competence, fitness and temperament;
- pupils with special educational or medical needs;
- the quality and suitability of available equipment;
- seasonal conditions, weather and timing.

First Aid

First Aid provision should be considered when assessing the risks of the visit. For adventurous activities, visits which involve overnight stays, or visits abroad it is sensible to have at least one trained first-aider in the group.

The group leader should have a working knowledge of First Aid and all adults in the group should know how to contact emergency services.

The minimum first-aid provision is: -

- a suitably stocked First-Aid box;
- a person appointed to be in charge of First-Aid arrangements.

First-Aid should be available and accessible at all times. If a First-Aider is attending to one member of the group, there should be adequate First-Aid cover for the other pupils. The Principal should take this into account when

assessing what level of First-Aid facilities will be needed. The contents of a first-aid kit will depend on what activities are planned.

Preparing Pupils

Providing information and guidance to pupils is an important part of preparing for a school visit. Pupils should have a clear understanding about what is expected of them and what the visit will entail. Pupils must understand what standard of behaviour is expected of them and why rules must be followed. The lack of control and discipline can be a major contributory factor when accidents occur.

Pupils should also be told about any potential dangers and how they should act to ensure their own and other's safety.

Pupils should be involved in planning, implementing and evaluating their own curricular work and have opportunities to take different roles within an activity. This could include considering any health and safety issues.

Participation

Pupils should be assessed to ensure that they are capable of undertaking the proposed activities. During the visit they should not be coerced into activities they fear.

Pupils whose behaviour is such that the group leader is concerned for their, or others' safety, should be withdrawn from the activity. On residential visits the group leader should consider whether such pupils will return home early.

Information to pupils

It is for the group leader to decide how to provide information, but they should be satisfied that the pupils understand key safety information. Pupils should understand: -

- the aims and objectives of the visit / activity;
- background information about the place to be visited;
- how to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow rules;
- why special safety precautions are in place for anyone with disabilities;
- what standard of behaviour is expected from pupils;
- who is responsible for the group;
- what to do if approached by a stranger;
- what to do if separated from the group;
- emergency procedures;
- rendezvous procedures.

Transport and Pupils

Pupils using transport on a visit should be made aware of basic safety rules including: -

- arrive on time and wait for the transport away from the road, track, etc.
- do not rush towards the transport when it arrives;
- wear your seatbelt and stay seated while travelling on transport;
- make sure your bags do not block aisles on the transport;
- never attempt to get on or off the moving transport;
- never throw things out of the transport vehicle's windows;
- never get off a vehicle held up by traffic lights or in traffic;
- never run about while transport is moving or pass someone on steps or stairs;
- never kneel or stand on seats or otherwise impede the driver's vision;
- never distract or disturb the driver;
- stay clear of automatic doors / manual doors after boarding or leaving the transport;
- after leaving the vehicle, always wait for it to move off before crossing the road;
- if you have to cross roads to get to the transport always use the Green Cross Code;
- if you feel unwell while travelling, tell a teacher or the person who is otherwise responsible for the group.

Pupils with Special Educational and Medical Needs

The Principal will ensure pupils with special educational or medical needs are not excluded from school visits. Every effort should be made to accommodate them whilst maintaining the safety of everyone on the visit.

Special attention should be given to appropriate supervision ratios and additional safety measures may need to be addressed at the planning stage.

Communicating with Parents / Guardians

Parents need to be aware that the teachers on the visit will be acting in their place ('in loco parentis') and will be exercising the same care that a prudent parent would. The following information on matters that might affect pupils' health and safety is useful to parents, and will be included in letter to parents / guardians prior to a visit: -

- dates of the visit;
- times of departure and return;
- mode(s) of travel including the name of any travel company;
- details of accommodation with security and supervisory arrangements on site;
- names of leader, or other staff and of other accompanying adults;

- objectives of the visit;
- details of the activities planned and of how the assessed risks will be managed;
- insurance taken out for the group as a whole in respect of luggage, accident, cancellation and medical cover. Any cover to be arranged by the parents, if appropriate, will be requested;
- clothing and equipment to be taken;
- money to be taken;
- the information to be given by parents and what they will be asked to consent to.

Parental Consent

Clough Primary School and Nursery Unit will seek consent for all activities where the pupils leave the school grounds.

If parents withhold consent, the pupil should not be taken on the visit, but the curricular aims of the visit should be delivered to the pupil in some other way, wherever possible. If the parents give a conditional consent, the Principal will need to consider whether the child may be taken on the visit or not. A parental consent form should be completed for each pupil in the group.

Residential visits

Hostels/hotels

The school will bear in mind the following: -

- the group leader/teachers should ideally have staff quarters close to the pupil's accommodation. We will endeavour to obtain a floor plan of the rooms reserved for the group's use in advance;
- the immediate accommodation area should be exclusively for the use of the group;
- access by staff to student rooms must be available at all times;
- separate male and female sleeping areas for pupils and adults;
- the whole party should be aware of the lay-out of the accommodation, its fire precautions/exits, its regulations and routing, and that everyone can identify key personnel;
- security arrangements - where the reception is not staffed 24 hours a day, security arrangements should be in force to stop unauthorised visitors;
- locks / shutters etc. should work on all the rooms used by the group;
- storage of clothes, luggage, equipment etc., particularly safekeeping of valuables;
- adequate lighting - it is advisable to bring a torch;
- provision for sick, disabled pupils or those with special needs;

- safety in rooms for example, electrical connections, secure balconies;
- recreational accommodation/facilities for the group.

Coastal visits

Group leaders and other teachers should be aware that many of the incidents affecting school children have occurred by or in the sea. There are dangers on the coast quite apart from those incurred in swimming.

The group leader should bear the following points in mind in the risk assessment of a coastal activity: -

- tides and sandbanks are potential hazards so timings and exit routes should be checked;
- ensure group members are aware of warning signs and flags;
- establish a base on the beach to which members of the group may return if separated;
- look out for hazards such as glass, barbed wire and sewage outflows etc.;
- some of a group's time on a beach may be recreational. Group leaders should consider which areas of the terrain and sea are out of bounds;
- cliff tops can be highly dangerous for school groups even during daylight. The group should keep to the path at all times. Group leaders should consider whether it is safe for pupils to ride mountain bikes on coastal paths.

Swimming

Swimming and paddling in the sea or other natural waters are potentially dangerous activities for a school group.

Swimming in the sea on a coastal visit, will not be allowed for Clough pupils. Paddling will only be allowed as part of a supervised activity, preferably in recognised bathing areas which have official surveillance. Pupils should always be in sight of their teachers. One teacher should always stay out of the water for better surveillance.

Where paddling is to be allowed on a visit, a ratio of 1 adult: 4 children is a minimum.

Farm Visits

Clough PS and NU recognises that farms can be dangerous even for the people who work on them. Taking children to a farm will be very carefully planned, and the risks to be assessed should include those arising from the misuse of farm machinery and the hazards associated with E coli 0157 food poisoning and other infections.

The proposed farm will be checked to ensure that it is well managed; that it has a good reputation for safety standards and animal welfare; and that it maintains good washing facilities and clean grounds and public areas. An exploratory visit should be carried out.

Emergency Procedures

It is the responsibility of the EVC/Principal 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;
- 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.

Policy Review

As with all policies, it is the responsibility of the Governors to evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and the practice that it describes. On a day to day basis this responsibility is delegated to the Principal who will report back to the governing body as appropriate.



Trip Application

Educational Visits Proposal (EPV)

Please complete this and email to the Principal before you book trip and transport arrangements



Date of Trip: __/__/20__	Time: Departing: __ Until: __	Teacher in Charge:	
Places to be visited:			
Educational Objectives of Trip			
Total Number of Children:		Cost to Children:	£
Category of Visit <i>(Delete those that don't count)</i>	<p>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</p> <p>Category 2 - One-off day /evening excursions (Non-hazardous) e.g. field study trips, theatre visits, business/education visits, regional sporting fixtures</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Category 4 - Residential visits outside the UK or Ireland (Non-hazardous) e.g. international exchange visits, sporting events, cultural activities and international community work</p> <p>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 etc.</p>		
Activities Children will participate in:			
Children with Special/Medical Needs on Trip:			
Additional Staff Required:			
Principal's Approval: (All Categories)	DATE:	Chair of BOG Approval: (Cat, 3, 4 or 5)	DATE:

Check List Items Before Trip:		
Complete EVP, Risk Assessment & Email to		
Principal Obtain Principal Consent		
Obtain Parental Consent		
<i>Book Venue & Transport</i>		
RISK ASSESSMENT SCORE (Calculated from the Scoring on the Next Page) = RISKS IDENTIFIED BY TEACHER IN CHARGE:		

RISK ASSESSMENT

This is an example of an approach to Risk Assessment, using a scoring mechanism. It should be recognised that there are other examples of good practice that already exist in schools and youth centres/projects. Such good practice should be built upon and disseminated across the whole school.

Risk assessment can be undertaken by identifying the hazards and then assessing the risk. Note that a hazard is anything with the potential to cause harm. Risk is the likelihood of harm from the hazard being realised.

Probability of occurrence	Score	Consequence of outcome
Highly unlikely to ever occur	1	Slight inconvenience
May occur but very rarely	2	Minor injury requiring First-Aid
Does occur but only rarely	3	Medical attention required
Occurs from time to time	4	Major injury leading to hospitalisation
Likely to occur often	5	Fatality or serious injury leading to disability

Risk = Probability of occurrence x Consequence of outcome

The level of risk can be calculated by multiplying **probability** by **consequence**, so providing a theoretical maximum score of 25. If the resulting score totals 10 or more then active management of the risk is required.

The vital issue is whether the risk can be managed. If there are doubts that the risk is manageable, then it is advisable to change the activity and/or the location.

Where there is considerable concern as to the outcome, it is better to abandon and redesign the educational visit than to expose young people to an unacceptable level of risk.

Group Leaders must fully record their risk management decisions on paper.

Adult Supervision Cover:

Foundation Stage (P1/P2) Age 4/6 = one adult for up to a maximum of ten young people

Key Stages 1 and 2 (P3-P7) Age 6/11 = one adult for up to a maximum of fifteen young people

TEACHER SCORING FOR RISK ASSESSMENT: Eg. $3 \times 3 = 9$ (Place the total score on front page of risk assessment)

TEACHER COMMENTS FOR RISK ASSESSMENT:

Eg. Limited risk of children participating in anything dangerous as they are going to visit a gallery/museum type setting and participating in craft/science based activities. Main risks will be during travel to and from the venue and around the venue. Children will not have unsupervised activities or play.

This Risk Assessment need only be completed if the EVP Application Form and initial risk assessment creates a scoring of 10 or above.
 Or if any member of staff deems it appropriate.

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	What further action is necessary?	Action by who?	Action by when?	Done
Inadequate planning and organisation						
Exposure to adverse effects of weather						
Young person lost or separated from group						
Leaders take their own children or other family members on visit						
Visit returns after school hours						
Emergencies Inadequate procedures						
Activities in, on or near water Special medical, behavioural needs of specific young people						
Misbehaviour Misconduct						

Periods of remote supervision						
Allergic reactions Poisons Stings, bites						

Completed by:

Date:

Educational Visit Incident Record Form

1 Name of School _____

2 Name of group leader _____

3 Date, Time and Location of Incident _____

4 Name and address(es) of witness(es)

(a) _____ (b) _____

5 (Please state in your own words what happened including details of names and status of those involved)

6 Describe what action was taken (e.g. details of First-Aid, police or medical involvement)

Signed _____ Date _____

Post Visit Review Form

Group Leader: _____

Visit to: _____

Dates: _____ **To:** _____

Please comment on the following:-

Issue	Response
Was the venue suitable?	
Was the accommodation/food/equipment of a suitable standard?	
Were the venue staff competent?	
Were the travel arrangements appropriate?	
Were the educational objectives met?	
Was the content of programme relevant to the group?	
Were the young people effectively briefed prior to the visit?	
Were agreed procedures followed by all in a supervisory capacity?	
Are there any specific issues which need to be addressed as a result of this visit?	

Other Comments:

Signed group leader: _____

Date: _____