

KEW WOODS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Policy for Trips and Off-Site Visits

Introduction

At Kew Woods we endeavour to offer our children as many opportunities for first-hand experience as possible. We believe that children benefit greatly from taking part in school visits. They have the opportunity to undergo experiences not available in the classroom and longer visits encourage and develop greater independence.

It is envisaged that the majority of trips will be closely linked with curricular work and planning. However, some trips may be undertaken because they are thought valuable in themselves and in a stand-alone context.

Planning

Prospective trips and off-site activities should be identified clearly within half-termly planning.

When planning visits, group leaders should consider:

- What is the aim of the visit?
- Is the aim being achieved in the most efficient and effective manner?
- What advice may be needed before proceeding?
- What are the skills and competencies of the accompanying staff and/or staff at the proposed venue?
- Does the proposed activity/venue offer value for money?

All trips and off-site activities should be researched thoroughly in terms of:

- Practical issues (costing/pupil and staff ratio*/ timing in relation to other events within school / appropriate transport)
- Health and Safety issues (including appropriate risk assessment*)

Organisation

The Headteacher/Educational Visit Coordinator should receive full details of the trip at least 3 weeks prior to the date of the proposed trip and no confirmed bookings should be made until formal approval has been received. The trip and visit proforma should be used to record this information. A copy of this form is appended to this policy, and a further copy is also available in the 'Proforma File' located in the reprographics room.

In the case of a trip involving an overnight stay (this includes trips within the UK and overseas), the Headteacher/Educational Visit Coordinator should receive a trip proforma at least 6 weeks prior to the proposed visit. Sefton LA require a separate overnight stay application form to be submitted and written permission from the LA must be received prior to the trip taking place. In the case of a trip involving an overnight stay, a member of staff (usually the Headteacher or EVC) should be supplied with full details of the trip. This should include copies of emergency contact numbers for all children and supervising staff and a full itinerary detailing the whereabouts of the group for the duration of the trip.

Information to Parents

Parents should be informed in writing of any off-site activity or visit unless it is a regular part of the school curriculum.

The letter to parents should contain the following information:

- Date, time and venue
- Teachers and support staff accompanying the group
- Any specific information regarding the activities and links to curriculum work.
- Any specific items needed for the trip such as waterproof clothing or packed lunches (please note that children who are eligible for free school meals are entitled to a packed lunch from the school kitchen. The number of packed lunches you require should be given to the cook well in advance of the visit).
- A request for the appropriate voluntary contribution. A final date for this to be handed in to school should be stated, along with a statement which explains that if insufficient contributions are made, it may be necessary to cancel the trip.
- A consent slip for parents to sign and return to school (this must be obtained from all parents before children are taken off-site).
- In the case of a trip involving an overnight stay, parents should also complete a medical consent form.

Preparing Pupils

Providing information and guidance to pupils is an important part of preparing for a school visit. Pupils should clearly understand what is expected of them and what the visit will entail. Standards of behaviour expected should be reinforced and rules explained. Children should be informed of any potential dangers (e.g. crossing roads etc) and how they should act in order to ensure their own safety and that of others.

The day of the trip or visit

A copy of the trip planning proforma should be left in the main office. This should clearly indicate any changes to staff or pupils numbers and must give a mobile telephone contact number for the group leader.

A complete list of children on the visit should be attached to the trip proforma. This can be in the form of a class list with any children who are absent / not taken for other reasons identified (classes where children are to be taught for the day should also be identified).

The group leader must ensure that all support staff and helpers are aware of their responsibilities, what activities are taking place and where to meet in an emergency.

Checklist of Equipment

Appropriate first aid

Bucket and paper towels

Plastic bags

School cheque

Admission documents

Class list

Group lists

Mobile contacts for other group members (essential if any part of the day involves separating the group for different activities)

Camera

Medical information (teachers should ensure that inhalers and other specific medication are available)

Important Information

It is essential to remember that at all times teachers are in charge of the group. If, in the teacher's opinion, any helper is putting the children at risk in any way they must intervene. This applies equally to guides or instructors who may be leading activities.

Members of staff should ensure they take particular care when supervising pupils on trips and outings, where the setting is less formal than within the school or classroom. Adults remain in a position of trust and must ensure their behaviour remains professional at all times.

Where an out of school activity includes an overnight stay, careful consideration should be given to sleeping arrangements. Parents and pupils should be informed of these prior to the start of the trip. Pupil teacher ratio and gender mix of staff should be given careful consideration when planning a trip which includes an overnight stay.

If an accident takes place whilst on visit, ensure an incident form is filled in on return to school. You may also be required to complete an appropriate record of the accident for the particular venue.

The school should be informed of any changes that may apply to a visit, particularly in relation to a return time. If for any reason it is likely the group will be delayed it is essential for the group leader to inform the school so that parents can be advised.

Trip Evaluation

Ensure that the evaluation section of the trip and visit proforma is completed following the visit. Please ensure that any aspects of the visit, which may inform future risk assessment, are detailed, as well as the overall impact of the visit on teaching and learning. A copy should be handed to for the Educational Visit Coordinator no later than one week from the date the trip took place.

Useful Guidance Documents

Health and Safety of pupils on Educational Visits (DES 1998)

Also in a three part supplement to the above:

Part 1: Standards for LEAs in Overseeing Educational Visits (DES 2002)

Part 2: Standards for Adventure (DES 2002)

Part 3: A Handbook for Group Leaders (DES 2002)

Staff : Pupil Ratio

The staff to pupil ratio guidance provided by the authority relates to overnight visits and should be used as guidance only. Many factors will need to be taken into account, during the process of planning the trip and through risk assessment. Factors to take into consideration will include the age and nature of the class and the duration and type of the visit to be undertaken. The Headteacher or Educational Visit Coordinator should be consulted if necessary.

The guidance issued by the Authority's insurers is as follows:

Up to age 7: a minimum of one member of staff for every 10 pupils.

Age 8 and upward: a minimum of one member of staff for every 15 pupils.

(Members of staff are taken to include teachers, nursery nurses and teaching assistants. It should be noted that two parents must be counted as one member of staff and that parents who are in supervision of groups should hold a current CRB disclosure).

The final decision on the staff to pupil ratio rests with the Headteacher.

Risk Assessment

Regardless of the type or duration of the trip, any proposed visit must involve formal planning. This should involve consideration of any dangers or difficulties that may arise, and making plans to reduce them. A risk assessment need not be complex, but it should be comprehensive. Risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place 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?

Many organisations now provide risk assessment information, which can be used when planning. The group leader should consider the following factors when completing a risk assessment:

- The type of visit
- The location, route and type of transport
- The competence, experience and qualifications of staff
- The staff: pupil ratio
- The group members' age, and competence in relation to the activity
- The special educational or medical needs of the pupils
- The quality and suitability of the equipment
- Seasonal conditions, weather and timing
- Emergency procedures
- The need to monitor the risks throughout the visit

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Class: _____ No of Children: _____

Trip Leader: _____

Accompanying teachers and other adults _____

Mobile telephone numbers: _____

Aims of visit: _____

Visit destination: _____

Date: _____

Dep' Time: _____ Ret' Time: _____

Transport Details: _____

Costings: _____

Total Cost: _____ Per Child: _____

Financial Actions:

(Submit financial action sheet to Tracey if required)

Packed lunches: _____

(Order from Nicky at least 1 week prior to the trip if required)

Other Details:

Risk Assessment

1. Place(s) to be visited _____

2. Potential Hazards

(for example: walking near water, crossing roads)

3. Lists of people who are at risk from the potential hazards

(for example: pupils, non-teaching staff, teachers)

4. List of existing controls

(for example: pupils given clear instructions prior to and during visit, appropriate supervision, exploratory visit made)

5. List of any other potential hazards and control measures

(for example: wet weather - appropriate clothing, adventurous activity - appropriately qualified instructor)

6. Ensure that you continually monitor hazards and adapt any controls throughout the visit.

(for example: road works – crossing place changed, severe weather - early return to school)

7. Please attach any additional risk assessment which has been supplied by the relevant organisation

