

EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The document Health and Safety on Educational Visits, A Good Practice Guide published by the DfEE (Sept 01) is essential reading for any member of staff planning, leading or participating in a school visit. It is available on teachernet.gov.uk.

Legal Framework

Under the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974 Bell Educational Trust (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 reasonably practicable, the health and safety of anyone else on the premises or anyone who may be affected by their activities. This includes participants in off-site visits.

The Management for Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1992, made under the 1974 Act require employers to:

- Assess the risk of activities
- Introduce measures to control those risks
- Tell employees about these measures

Also under Health & Safety legislation employees must:

- Take reasonable care of their own and others' health & 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 off site activities. 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.

Prior to all off site activities staff should refer to the specific Activity Risk Assessment for associated risk management requirements.

Approval For Visits

BBIS has a written procedure for arranging visits, which is followed by all staff. Supplementing this is an approval application signed off by the Head or one of the Deputy Heads. (At present the Deputy Heads have delegated responsibility for approval of off site visits).

BBIS will:

- Ensure that the visit has a specific and stated objective;
- Ensure that the person leading the visit shows how their plans comply with current regulations and guidelines, including the BBIS health & safety policy.

The Head or Deputy Head and the person leading the visit will ensure that:

- Adequate child protection procedures are in place;
- All necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins;
- The Risk Assessment has been completed and appropriate safety measures are in place;

- Training needs have been assessed by a competent person and the needs of staff and pupils, including anticipated language difficulties, have been considered;
- The Leader has experience in supervising pupils and can organise the group effectively;
- The Leader is suitably competent to instruct the activity and is familiar with the location/centre where the activity will take place;
- The Leader will be allowed sufficient time to organise visits properly;
- Non-teacher supervisors are appropriate people to supervise pupils;
- Ratio of staff to pupils is appropriate and within DCSF guidelines;
- Arrangements have been made to ensure the medical needs and special educational needs for all pupils are met;
- Adequate first-aid provision will be available.

Arranging a visit

The member of staff organising the visit should seek the approval of the Head or Deputy Head and (in the case of sports activities) the Sports coordinator. This member of staff will usually be the designated person leading the party. Initially the leader will seek permission to run the visit. This is achieved by completing the relevant form and submitting it to the head or deputy head. The Head or Deputy Head may approve decline or set conditions on the visit.

Preliminary visits/ risk assessments

It is essential that formal planning takes place before setting off. This involves considering the dangers and difficulties which may arise and making plans to reduce them. A preliminary visit may be made by the party leader (unless the party leader has recent experience of the site) to familiarise themselves with the site and carry out the necessary risk assessments. In particular attention should be paid to fire and other safety hazards and any difficulties that may be encountered.

Preparation of students

It is important that the students be briefed before the visit so that they understand the aims of the visit, the activities planned, safety procedures, appropriate dress and standards of behaviour, possible sanctions if the guidelines are ignored and reference to areas that are out of bounds.

Students on visits are ambassadors for Bell and their own country. Students should be briefed that the highest standards of behaviour are required at all times including the journey. In general students should wear at least a school top unless the nature or duration of the visit makes this impractical.

Educational Visits Staffing Guidelines

Staffing needs to be in line with Bell policy requirements.

- The staff: pupil ratio should be a minimum of 1:14. In London the staff: pupil ratio should be at least 1:10. Each teacher should know which particular pupils he/she is responsible for, and each pupil should know which teacher they are with;
- There should normally be at least one male and one female member of staff (or other responsible adult) in the party if the students are both male and female. If female students are in the party a female member of staff (or other responsible adult) must be in attendance.
- The Head or Deputy Head should, in liaison with the Leader appoint a leader for each coach or minibus used. This person is responsible for that vehicle on the educational visit.
- It is desirable that at least one of the accompanying adults have a current qualification in first aid.
- The party leader should ensure that suitable travelling first aid kits are available to groups and that possible additional items for students with special needs are available.

- The leader should ensure that staff have adequate knowledge concerning any special medical or dietary requirements that students might have.

Staff responsibilities whilst on Educational Visits

These should be described carefully and in detail to the staff:

- by the Head or Deputy Head in general terms during any induction meeting;
- by the Leader during specific Educational Visit briefings;
- as required by any member of the management team.

Bell International takes out public liability insurance to cover teachers against accident to person or property while students are in their charge. Copies of this are available from BBIS and copies of the certificates of insurance are displayed in the Main Building.

Guidelines to be followed by staff

- No pupil should leave BBIS without an identity card - the original or a duplicate. These may prove vital if a pupil becomes separated from the group and members of staff should check that pupil have their cards on departure. Pupils should also have an itinerary, with the time and place to meet if they are allowed to shop, or look around a museum for a short period of time;
- All members of staff should have important telephone numbers for use in an emergency, before departure;
- Staff should count pupils onto coaches at every departure point, and check numbers regularly throughout the trip;
- All passengers in minibuses and coaches must wear seat belts;
- Pupils are not allowed to stand up or move about in vehicles while they are in motion;
- Pupils may be allowed to disperse in groups of at least three in a designated area, unaccompanied by an adult, e.g. to shop, for a limited period. The limits of the area in which they are allowed to disperse should be clearly defined, and at least one member of staff should be available within the specified area, in case they are needed;
- Parents may request that their children are never unaccompanied. House Parents should inform the Leader of any such pupils;
- Wherever possible, however, sub-groups of pupils should be accompanied by a teacher throughout the Educational Visit;
- Staff should establish road safety routines for groups, bearing in mind that many of the pupils will be unused to vehicles driving on the left;
- Accidents sometimes occur in spite of all precautions and teachers are advised to think through in advance what action they might take should the unexpected occur;
- In the event of an emergency, staff should ensure that pupils are under supervision before leaving the group. They should telephone BBIS as soon as possible to ensure liaison between coach leader and the Head. The Head makes any final decisions; (If the Head is unavailable the Principal or Deputy Head will take responsibility).
- Staff and pupils should check vehicles for lost property before they depart at the end of Educational Visits;
- If pupils are taken away from the course centre overnight, e.g. a weekend trip to London, they should never be left unsupervised in hotels/hostels/restaurants or on any means of transport. They must be supervised at any externally organised event such as a disco.
- Particular care should be taken with food and drink. It is best to stipulate particular times for eating and drinking, especially if long coach journeys are involved.

Off site for other reasons

With parents/relatives

Parents/relatives/agents who wish to take their children off-site for the day or weekend must make arrangements in advance with the Deputy Head (Pastoral). If the adult is not the parent or guardian the Deputy Head (Pastoral) must receive permission, in writing, from the parent/guardian together with a statement in writing from the adult supervising the student that they are able to take full responsibility for the student's proper supervision, welfare and good behaviour. Full details of the visit – transport, meeting points, contact phone number and, in the case of an overnight visit, the address to be stayed at, must also be supplied. Parental permission should normally be sought for off-site visits with educational agents, although some regular Bell agents may be allowed to take their students off to a local teashop etc. This written permission must be logged in the pupil's file by the House Parent. No person under the age of 18 (e.g. older brothers and sisters) may take any pupil off-site. The Deputy Head (Pastoral)/House Parent may ask the adult for proof of identity when s/he comes to pick up the pupil.

Road Safety

Pupils are given a road safety briefing as part of their induction. This includes the instruction to find a safe place to cross and ALWAYS to wait for the green man to show at pelican crossings. Incidents of unsafe behaviour at crossings should be reported, without exception, to house parents and will result in a loss of pupils' free time. Staff are expected to set a good example when out with pupils.

OFF SITE VISITS CHECKLIST: a few days before leaving

Have individual medical/special needs been identified?

Does a designated person in the school know:

- Precisely which students will be out?
- With whom and for what purpose
- When they are due to return and when they have actually returned.

Has a pre site survey been completed?

Have all potential hazards and dangers been noted and risk assessments carried out?

Although generic risk assessments are possible, when was it last checked, is it still acceptable?

Has the time and distance to and from the site been checked?

Have timetables for public transport been checked (if applicable)?

Have necessary reservations been made and confirmed?

Have any necessary booking been made?

Have the problems associated with large numbers of students moving through busy or potentially dangerous locations been considered?

Has thought been given to how supervisors will be deployed? (It is recommended that there should be one supervisor at the front and one at the rear)

Are controlled crossing points available to cross roads? If there are none available have suitable crossing points been noted and has it been considered whether it is best to get students across as a large group or in smaller groups?

Have packed lunches been ordered if required?

OFF-SITE VISITS CHECKLIST

Before you leave:

- Do you have approval for the visit?
- Have all staff read the risk assessment?
- Is the staff / student ratio appropriate?
- Is there female cover?
- Have staff been briefed?
- Do staff have mobile phones?
- Have ID cards been checked?
- Has the list of staff and students been left in the File and at Reception?

On the vehicle:

- First Aid Kit
- Sick bags and tissues
- Rubbish Bag
- Information pack (list of staff and students, mobile phone numbers, map, information / work sheets, medical information)
- Expenses money / driver's tip
- Mobile phone

During the visit:

- Seatbelts must be worn by students and staff
- Staff should initially place themselves strategically to ensure order. Don't just all sit at the front
- Students are not allowed to stand up or move about the vehicle while it is in motion.
- Be aware of noise levels, obstructing other visitors, general behaviour and litter during visit
- Give pupils a limited period of free time (agreed in advance with the Deputy Head responsible) to go off in groups of 3 minimum. If they return on time, they may be given a further period of free time at their teacher's discretion.
- road safety rules to be applied without exception
- Have students been given clear instructions as to what to do if they are lost?
- Do all supervisors have a contact number in cases of emergency?
- Do all supervisors have a mobile telephone number of all students?
- Do all supervisors know the arrangements for first aid? The location of the first aid kit?

At the end of a visit:

- Make sure students say Thank You to driver (yourself included if self-driving)
- Complete mileage form (if self-driving)
- Check vehicles for lost property and collect rubbish before leaving vehicle.
- Lock vehicle and return keys (if self-driving)

APPLICATION FOR THE APPROVAL OF OFF SITE VISITS

Group:

Group leader:

The group leader should complete this form as soon as possible once the preparations are complete. The group leader should have already received approval of the proposed visit in principle and should have regularly updated the Head Teacher (or Deputy) on the progress of the preparations.

When approval is given, one copy should be retained by the Head teacher (or Deputy) and another by the group leader. The Head Teacher (or Deputy) should be informed of any subsequent changes in planning, organisation, staffing.

1. Purpose of visit and specific educational objectives:

2. Places to be visited:

3. Dates and times:

Date of Departure:

Time:

Date of Return:

Time:

4. Transport arrangements: Include the name of the transport company and vehicle registration number(s).

MODEL

FORM

5. Organising company/agency (if any): Include licence reference number if the body is registered with the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority.

Name:

Address:

Tel:

Licence No if registered:

6. Proposed cost and financial arrangements:

7. Accommodation to be used (If applicable):

Name:

Telephone Number:



Name of head of centre (if available):

8. Details of the programme of activities:

9. Details of any hazardous activity and the associated planning, organisation and staffing:

10. Names, relevant experience, qualifications and specific responsibilities of staff accompanying the party:

11. Names, relevant qualifications and specific responsibilities of other adults accompanying the party:

12. Existing knowledge of places to be visited and whether an exploratory visit is intended:

13. Size and composition of the group:

Age range:

Number of boys:

Number of girls:

Adult to pupil ratio:

Leader/participant ratio:

14. Names of pupils with special educational or medical needs:

Signed:

Date:

Group leader full name:

Please continue on further sheets if necessary



What and where	When	Assessed by:
What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?
What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?
What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?
What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?
What further action is necessary	How will you put the assessment into action?	How will you put the assessment into action?
What further action is necessary	How will you put the assessment into action?	How will you put the assessment into action?
What further action is necessary	How will you put the assessment into action?	How will you put the assessment into action?
What further action is necessary	How will you put the assessment into action?	How will you put the assessment into action?

CONFIRMATION FOR VISIT TO GO AHEAD

To be completed by the Head Teacher or a Deputy Head

To the group leader:

I have studied this application and am satisfied with all aspects including the planning, organisation and staffing of this visit. Approval is given.

- a. Please ensure that I have all relevant information including a final list of group members, and a detailed itinerary at least seven days before the party is due to leave.
- b. Your report and evaluation of the visit including details of any incidents should be with me as soon as possible but no later than 14 days after the party returns.

Signed:

Date:

Full name:

A copy of the completed application form and details of any subsequent changes should be retained by the Head Teacher or a Deputy.

EVALUATION OF THE VISIT TO BE COMPLETED BY THE GROUP LEADER FOR FUTURE REFERENCE

Group Leader:

Number in Group:

Boys:

Girls:

Supervisors:

Date(s) of Visit:

Purpose(s) of Visit:

Venue:

Commercial Organisation:

Rating out of 10

1. The Centre's pre-visit organisation:
2. Travel arrangements:
3. Content of education programme provided:
4. Instruction:
5. Equipment:
6. Suitability of environment:
7. Accommodation:
8. Food:
9. Evening activities:
- 10 Courier/Representative:
11. Other comments and evaluation including "close calls" not involving injury or damage:

Signed:

Date:

Group leader's full name:

To be detached and completed after all ventures and logged in the school's central records.