

# GRESHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

## EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

### **RATIONALE**

Well planned and executed educational visits provide our pupils with valuable experiences which enhance their learning at school. Providing a variety of 'real-life' opportunities for our children enables them to achieve a fuller understanding of the world around them through direct experience. Educational visits are an essential element of good primary practice.

### **AIMS OF THE POLICY:**

Educational visits can provide stimulus and support to work being covered as part of the school curriculum. It may be that a visit provides an effective stimulus at the start of a unit of work; alternatively teachers may decide to use an educational visit at any time during a project to enhance and support the curriculum.

Wherever or whatever the venue the educational benefits to the children will be maximised.

### **PROCEDURES:**

#### **Guidelines**

The organisation of an educational visit is crucial to its success. With rigorous organisation and control, a visit should provide a rich, learning experience for the pupils.

The following guidelines support the planning and implementation of educational visits organised at Gresham Primary School.

#### **Headteacher**

The Headteacher at Gresham will endeavour to ensure that:

- a suitable group leader has been appointed;
- all necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins;
- pupils are aware of the behaviour expected when on the trip;
- the risk assessment is complete and that it is safe to make the visit;
- training needs have been met;
- the group leader has experience in supervising and controlling the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively;
- the group leader has relevant skills, qualifications and experience if acting as an instructor, and knows the location of the activity;
- all supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise children and have appropriate clearance;
- the Governing Body or Local Authority has approved the visit if necessary;
- parents have signed consent forms;
- arrangements have been made for all the medical needs and special educational needs of all the children;
- the mode of travel is appropriate;
- travel times out and back are known;
- there is adequate and relevant insurance cover;
- the school has the address and phone number of the venue being visited and has a contact name;

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- the school has the names of all the adults and pupils in the travelling group, and the contact details of parents and the staff's and volunteers' next of kin.

### **Group Leader**

One teacher, the group leader, is responsible overall for the supervision and conduct of the visit, and should have been appointed by the Headteacher. The Group Leader should:

- be able to control and lead pupils of the relevant age range;
- be suitably qualified if instructing an activity and be conversant in the good practice for that activity if not;
- undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members and parents;
- undertake and complete a comprehensive risk assessment;
- have regard to the health and safety of the group at all times;
- know all the pupils proposed for the visit to ensure that their needs are met;
- liaise with a member of the Leadership Group if they have concerns about the participation of a particular child e.g. a child with SEN or behavioural needs;
- observe the guidance set out for teachers and other adults below;
- ensure that pupils understand their responsibilities (see responsibilities of pupils below).

### **Other teachers and adults involved in a visit**

Teachers on school-led visits act as employees of the LA or of the Governing Body. They will, therefore, be acting in the course of their normal employment during their normal hours. They will be acting under an agreement with their Headteacher and governors if some of their time on the visit falls outside normal hours.

All adults on the visit must:

- do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group;
- care for each individual pupil as any reasonable parent would;
- follow the instructions of the leader and help with control and discipline. Non-teachers should generally not have sole charge of pupils except where risks to health and safety are minimal;
- consider stopping the visit or the activity if they think the risk to the health or safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable.

### **Responsibilities of pupils**

The group leader should make it clear to pupils that they must:

- not take unnecessary risks;
- follow the instructions of the leader and other adults;
- dress and behave sensibly and responsibly;
- look out for anything that might hurt or threaten anyone in the group and tell the group leader about it;

Any pupils whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be prevented from going on the visit. The curricular aims of the visit for these pupils should be fulfilled in other ways.

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## Parents

The group leader should ensure that parents are given information about the purpose and details of the visit and are invited to any briefing sessions for longer visits.

The group leader should also tell parents how they can help prepare their child for the visit by, for example, reinforcing the visit's code of conduct.

Special arrangements may be necessary for parents for whom English is a second language;

Parents must:

- provide the group leader with emergency contact number(s);
- sign the consent form so as to give permission for their child to go on the visit;
- give the school relevant information about their child's health which might be relevant to the visit;
- support the school to ensure that the needs of their child are met e.g. food, clothing etc;
- consider accompanying their child on the trip so that it is accessible for their child;
- prepare any equipment correctly so that their child can access the trip;

## Planning off-site visits

Whether the visit is to a local park, museum, swimming pool, or includes a residential stay, it is essential that careful planning takes place. This involves considering the dangers and difficulties which may arise and making plans to avoid them.

The Headteacher is responsible for planning all off-site visits. In practice, the detailed planning is delegated to the organiser of the visit or the group leader, but the Headteacher must be satisfied that the person planning the visit is qualified to do so and has the necessary experience.

The organiser/group leader must agree all plans with the Headteacher.

## Risk Assessment

A risk assessment should always be carried out before setting off on a visit. The risk assessment will decide the adult:child ratio for each visit. (See Guidance under 'Supervision'). 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.

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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.

### **Exploratory visit**

Wherever possible the group leader should undertake an exploratory visit to:

- ensure that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit;
- assess potential areas and levels of risk;
- ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and pupils in the group;
- ensure that the group leader is familiar with the area before taking a party of young people.

If it is not feasible to carry out an exploratory visit, a minimum measure should be to contact the venue, seeking assurances about the venue's appropriateness for the visiting group. In addition, it may be worth seeking views from other schools who have recently visited the venue. In some cases, such as when taking walking parties to remote areas, it may be appropriate to obtain local information from the Tourist Boards.

### **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, where possible at least one trained first-aider will be included 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 Headteacher 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.

### **Supervision**

It is important to have a sufficient ratio of adult supervisors to pupils for any off-site visit. The factors to take into consideration include:

- sex, age and ability of group;
- special needs pupils;
- nature of activities;
- experience of adults in off-site supervision;

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- duration and nature of the journey;
- type of any accommodation;
- competence of staff, both general and on specific activities.

There should always be enough supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency. When visits are to remote areas or involved hazardous activities, the risks may be greater and supervision levels should be set accordingly.

As general guidelines, the following ratio of adults to children should be used:

Foundation Stage, visits off-site <u>may</u> be as low as:	1:2
Key Stage One, visits off-site on foot:	1:10
Key Stage One, visits off site involving public transport:	1:6
Key Stage Two, visits off-site on foot:	1:15
Key Stage Two, visits off-site involving public transport:	1: 10

Regardless of these suggested ratios, each visit will be assessed individually through the school's risk assessment procedure for educational visits.

\*These ratios do not include residential visits.

Where there is more than one adult supervisor a group leader, who has authority over the whole party, should be appointed.

Where a high adult:pupil ratio is required, it is not always feasible to use school staff alone. Parents with appropriate DBS/List 99 clearance may be used to supplement the supervision ratio if the helper is to be left alone with pupils at any stage. If adults are not to be left alone with pupils a DBS/List 99 check is not required. They should be carefully selected and ideally they should be well known to the school and the pupil group.

All adult supervisors, including school staff and parent helpers must understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. In particular, all supervisors should be aware of any pupils who may require closer supervision, such as those with special needs or those with behavioural difficulties. Teachers retain responsibility for the group at all times.

If it is not possible to meet the needs of particular pupils when planning a trip, a decision should be made as to whether they are to participate. If the procedures outline here cannot be followed as a result of their participation, then the decision should be that the pupils are unable to participate.

For the protection of both adults and pupils, all adult supervisors should ensure that they are not alone in a one to one situation with a pupil.

If the school is leading an adventure activity, such as canoeing, the LA or Governing Body must ensure that the group leader and other supervisors are suitably qualified to lead and instruct the activity before they agree that the visit can take place. Qualifications can be checked with the National Governing Body of each sporting activity.

Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of pupils should take place. The group leader should establish meeting points and tell pupils what to do if they become separated from the party.

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## Costs and funding of trips and events

Trips provided in school time or those forming part of the National Curriculum are not chargeable. However, the school will request voluntary contributions to cover the cost of the trip or event. Contribution amounts requested for trips and events will not exceed the cost of the event, including any additional staffing hours, travel, venue costs etc, divided equally between the number of children expected to participate.

No pupils will be prevented from participating in a trip or visit due to funds not being provided by the parents or carers. However, the school may decide to cancel an event or trip if the costs of the trip or event cannot be covered by voluntary contributions. General school funding cannot be used to cover a shortfall between contributions received and the full cost of the event or trip.

The school will not 'chase' individual parents who have not provided a voluntary contribution but may send a blanket message to all parents in an attempt to secure the contributions required for the event to take place. Letters sent to parents will make it clear that they should contact the school if making the voluntary contribution is likely to be difficult.

Parents who have children who qualify for Free School Meals using the criteria applied to this award and those who are in receipt of Pupil Premium Funding will be exempt from any charges for a trip or event. They may still make a voluntary contribution.

There are some trips or events which are chargeable and these include;

- Music tuition which is requested by a parent
- Education which is provided outside of school time which is not part of the National Curriculum
- Trips where board and lodging as part of a residential visit e.g. Science Night and PGL
- Extended Day services e.g. After School and Breakfast Clubs

## 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 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.

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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 safety precautions are in place;
- why special safety precautions are in place for anyone with SEND;
- 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
- meeting point 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 a seatbelt and stay seated while travelling on transport;
- make sure 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 having to cross roads to get to the transport always use the Green Cross Code
- if feeling unwell while travelling, tell a teacher or the person who is otherwise responsible for the group.

### **Pupils with special educational and medical needs**

All educational visits will be made available to all pupils, including those with special educational or medical needs. 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. However, the safety of all pupils will be paramount and staff must assess the needs of pupils and the risks associated with those needs before deciding if a child can participate.

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## 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;
- details of accommodation with security and supervisory arrangements on site;
- name of leader;
- visit’s objectives;
- for residential and adventure visits, that 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, if not school uniform;
- money to be taken;
- the information to be given by parents and what they will be asked to consent to.

## Parental consent

Gresham Primary School will seek consent for each visit where:

- visits are not ‘local’ visits;
- adventure activities;
- visits abroad;
- other residential visits.

A ‘blanket’ one-off permission form will be issued to parents to be signed for local visits. These are visits in the immediate locality of the school and do not require the use of transport.

If parents withhold consent absolutely 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 Headteacher will need to consider whether the child may be taken on the visit or not. The school’s parental consent form should be completed for each pupil in the group.

## Residential visits

### Hostels and Hotels

The school will bear in mind the following:

- the group leader should ideally have adjoining rooms with staff quarters next to the young people’s – 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;
- ensure that the whole party are aware of the lay-out of the accommodation, its fire precautions/exits, its regulations and routing, and that everyone can identify key personnel;

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- security arrangements – where the reception is not staffed 24 hours a day, security arrangements should be in force to stop unauthorised visitors;
- ensure that locks/shutters etc. 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 (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. At Gresham, 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 Gresham children. Pupils should always be in sight of their teachers.

### **Farm visits**

At Gresham we recognise 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.

The basic rules for a farm visit will be:

We will never let pupils:

- place their faces against the animals or their hands in their mouths after feeding them;

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- eat until they have washed their hands;
- sample any animal foodstuffs;
- drink from farm taps (other than in designated public facilities);
- ride on tractors or other machines;
- play in the farm area.

### **INCLUSION**

We recognise the fact that there are children of widely different abilities in all classes and we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this by:

- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty, some children not completing all tasks;
- providing resources of different complexity according to the ability of the child;
- choosing appropriate venues with access for all pupils
- where possible, using classroom assistants to support the work of individual children or groups of children.

Where particular pupils have learning and assessment requirements which go beyond the provision described above, and which must be addressed in order to overcome barriers to learning, for example as a result of a special educational need, disability, or linked to the pupils' progress in learning English as an additional language teachers will take account of these requirements by:

- making provision where necessary to support individuals or groups of pupils to enable them to participate effectively in the curriculum and assessment.
- taking account of the type and extent of the difficulty experienced by the pupil. In many cases the action necessary to respond to an individual's requirements for curriculum access will be met through greater differentiation of tasks and materials, consistent with school-based intervention as set out in the SEN Code of Practice.

Where pupils need access to specialist equipment or adapted activities teachers will refer to and implement the pupils' statement of special educational needs and work closely with representatives of the venue.

### **SOCIAL, MORAL, SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL EDUCATION**

By going on educational visits the children learn to value their own and other people's cultures in modern multicultural Britain. By considering how people lived in the past, in the present or in other parts of the world they are better able to make their own life choices today. We ensure that when selecting venues a range of perspectives and viewpoints are represented; including those of men and women of different racial, national or religious groups. We ensure that societies are not just represented from the British perspective but also from their own. The importance of the pupil's own cultural background and those of members of the school and wider local community is recognised as a factor in choosing venues.

Particular care will be taken to ensure that pupils develop an awareness of:

- the causes and consequences of prejudice, discrimination and inequality together with an appreciation of the treatment of a range of disadvantaged groups;
- the need to challenge racist and sexist stereotypes, images and language;

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- the importance of looking at situations and events from a variety of cultural, social, economic and political perspectives;
- the value of studying a range of societies in different parts of the world and exploring the encounters between different cultures and cultural groups;
- the full extent of the contribution and experiences of women, men and children in different and from different cultural groups together with the need to provide positive role models for different pupils.

### **MONITORING AND IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY**

- Through INSET, staff meetings and informal discussions to share ideas, disseminate good practice, review progress and highlight areas for development.
- Through enabling teachers to have access to each teacher's planning so that staff can see what other year groups are doing and what their class has done in previous years.
- Through Headteacher and Subject Leader monitoring visit plans and risk assessments to ensure that visits adhere to the agreed guidelines.
- Through informal discussions between the subject leaders and staff to exchange opinions and ascertain needs.
- Through observation of children's work and display and through discussion with the children.

### **EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF THE POLICY**

- By examining samples of children's work.
- Through talking informally to children to gain their view of their progress.
- By talking informally to teachers.
- Through LA inspectors' reports and the reports/comments of other visitors. (Governors, visiting teachers, advisers, etc.)
- Through auditing venues and visit objectives and examining organisation and use of resources.
- Through LA and OFSTED inspectors' reports and the reports/comments of other education professionals who visit the school.

**Confirmation the Policy for Educational Visits in respect of Gresham Primary School has been agreed, approved and ratified by the Governing Body:**

Signed by:

Chair of Governors: ..... Date: .....

Headteacher: ..... Date: .....

Approved at the Governing Body Meeting on:

Minute reference: