



Stadhampton Primary School

Educational Visits Policy

Date of Review: April 2025

Date of next review: April
2027

Introduction:

Trips, visits and learning off-site comprise an essential part of the curriculum at Stadhampton Primary School. Successful trips provide memorable learning experiences and enhance the children's education in ways that are not possible in the classroom. The school is committed to providing school visits as a positive way of developing childrens' independent, investigative learning, and to build their experience of the local and wider world.

This policy provides a framework for planning trips of all kinds. It should be read in conjunction with the LA guidelines for educational visits 'Safety in Outdoor Education' and the Outdoor Education Adviser Panel (OEAP) national guidelines.

The management of all visits will be based on the outcome of suitable and sufficient risk assessment. Teachers will ensure that such risk assessments are carried out as part of the planning process.

It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that the risk to the health and safety of participants is minimised by the process of continuous vigilance and on-going risk assessment.

Where activities take place on sites with their own visit risk assessments, these must be obtained prior to visit, read by all adults attending in conjunction with the schools own risk assessment.

Definition

For the purposes of this policy, an 'educational visit' means any educational, cultural or sporting activity that requires the children to leave the school premises having been authorised to do so by the Headteacher. This includes the following:

- Visits to places of interest in the local area
- Day visits to museums, galleries and places of educational interest
- Forest School
- Sporting activities
- Outward bound and adventurous activities
- Visits abroad

Principles:

Well planned and executed educational visits provide 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. As a result, Stadhampton Primary School is committed to incorporating educational visits into the schemes of learning, providing they will enhance the pupils' relevant understanding and experiences, and that they take place at relevant points in time.

All staff should have the option to take part in visits and those who organise them should consult the EVC (Educational Visits Coordinator) before planning a trip / approaching any proposed accompanying adults. A major consideration in the organisation of any visit must be the safety of the participants and both the OEAP guidelines and the school policy must be complied with.

Ratios. Staffing ratios for visits are difficult to prescribe, as they will vary according to the activity, age, group, location and the efficient use of resources. The DfES guidance suggests that for visits to local historical sites and museums and local walks, the ratio in normal circumstances would be:

- 1 adult for every 6 pupils (years 1 – 3),

- Foundation Stage 1 settings must have a higher ratio;
- 1 adult for every 10-15 pupils (years 4 –6);
- 1 adult for every 15 – 20 pupils (year 7+).
- Minimum 1:10 for visits to countries other than that of residence.

There must always be a minimum of two adults.

An activity must have sufficient accompanying adults in order to provide the appropriate minimum ratio. There will always be at least two adults (one of whom must be a teacher or teaching assistant) with the group. These are the basic requirements, and should not automatically be taken as providing appropriate supervision; they should be amended to suit the actual visit and the associated hazard.

The party leader for a trip must be satisfied that the venue is a suitable one, and where appropriate any officials from the venue who will be involved in the visit / activities are suitably qualified.

Final ratio numbers are to be added to each individual visit/activities risk assessment.

Planning the Visit:

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 school has an appointed Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) whose role is to coordinate the planning and management of these activities. All off-site activities must be approved by the EVC at least two weeks prior to the proposed date of the trip, unless the trip has been planned in response to an educational opportunity that has arisen, for example, a last minute invitation to a significant event or a rearranged sporting fixture.

Roles & Responsibilities:

(i) The Head Teacher or EVC will ensure that:

- the visit is planned and risk assessed, including an exploratory visit whenever possible.
- the visit complies with National and Oxfordshire County Council guidelines.
- parents/guardians have been made fully aware of the nature, purpose and detail of a visit and that permission including all relevant information is obtained for any off site activity. (we have a general local visit consent signed at the beginning of each new year and new pupils to the school)
- travel arrangements are clear.
- there is adequate and relevant insurance cover.
- they have the names and contact details of all the adults and pupils in the travelling group.
- that all appropriate enquiries are made of any establishment or company being used for residential or outdoor adventurous activities. (Providers with the LOtC Quality Badge have had a rigorous check to ensure all is in place including risk assessments)
- 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.
- arrangements have been made for all the medical needs and special educational needs of all the children.
- all pupils are informed of the nature and purpose of the visit.

- all adults on the visit whether teaching, TA or parent are aware of their roles and responsibilities

(ii) Group Leader

The Group Leader is responsible for the overall supervision and conduct of the visit.

The Group Leader will:

- ensure that the visit is as safe as practical
- appoint a deputy;
- 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 as directed in guidance;
- 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 assess their suitability;
- observe the guidance set out for teachers and other adults below;
- ensure that pupils understand their responsibilities (see responsibilities of pupils below).

(iii) Other teachers and adults involved in a visit:

Teachers on school-led visits act as employees of the Acer Trust. 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.

(iv) Teachers and other 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.*
- ensure they undertake the roles and tasks given to them so as not to put themselves or others at unacceptable risk.
- 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.
- refer to Stadhampton Primary School Behaviour Policy

(v) Responsibilities of 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 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.

The group leader will 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.
- not undertake any task that they fear or that they think will be dangerous.
- abide by the code of conduct during residential visits.
- be aware of any pupils whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group. They may be stopped from going on the visit.

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.
- 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.
- give the group leader relevant information about their child's health or SEND which might be relevant to the visit.

Pre-visit preparation:

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.

All visits must benefit from an exploratory / preliminary visit if this is at all possible. For outdoor visits this is essential and some tour operators will arrange preliminary visits before firm bookings are made.

Preliminary visits contribute to the planning by ensuring the venue:

- can be effectively assessed for risk.
- can be effectively assessed with regards to it meeting the needs of the visit.
- can cater for the needs of the group.
- can contribute to the overall planning by ensuring the Group Leader:
- is familiar with the geographical, logical and social aspects of the venue.
- has met staff at the venue and discussed relevant information specific to our school needs.

Many visits are a straightforward repeat of a previous trip but with a different group of pupils but many factors can change between visits and therefore it will still be good practice to carry out a repeat preliminary visit. If this is not possible, it is essential that the Group Leader contacts the venue to assess what may have changed from previous visits.

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.

- have an outlined Plan B should any barriers affect the trip (eg alternative traffic routes, adult helper illness, toilets, weather)

Other considerations:

The school will follow the guidance set out by the OEAP with regard to First Aid, approval for the type of visit, depending on the category the visit falls into, safety and dealing with any accidents if they occur. Thorough risk assessments must always be carried out before setting off on a visit. Risk assessments are approved by the validated EVC at least a week before the visit is planned. The Acer Trust forms must be used for this and a copy of these should be left at school as well as being taken on the trip. Any pupils requiring any additional First Aid requirements (eg inhalers) should be named in the Risk Assessment to highlight provision. The risk assessment must be read and signed by all accompanying adults. However, it must be noted that the group leader and other supervisors should continually reassess the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action if pupils are in danger.

The school critical incident plan will also be implemented, if the need arises during the visit.

Mobile phones should be carried at all times and the mobile numbers of accompanying staff exchanged.

Where a high adult: pupil ratio is required, it is not always feasible to use school staff alone. Parents with appropriate clearance may be used to supplement the supervision ratio. 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. 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.

The minimum first-aid provision for any trip is two qualified first aiders with a suitably stocked first-aid box and children's medication e.g. asthma pumps etc. 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. All visits of a residential nature will have a code of conduct which parents / carers will be asked to sign before the visit departs, to confirm that they have read this and discussed it with their child. Where the code of conduct is broken and the safety & enjoyment of others is jeopardised as a result, the school reserves the right to demand that parents collect their children within 12 hours, at their own expense to enable school staff to continue with their role.

Financial planning for the visit and any request for remissions will be in line with the school charging and remissions policy. If a trip is not financially viable, it cannot go ahead. Pupil Premium Grant funding may be used to pay for children eligible for free school meals to take part.

The Headteacher will not exclude pupils with special educational or medical needs 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.

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

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 pupil's 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;
- visit's objectives;
- 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.

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 visit 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 Stadhampton children. 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. Governors should be notified in advance of any activities involving water.

Pre-trip checklist

Procedures prior to the Visit

Please tick when completed

1. Inform the headteacher as to rationale for visit, check that proposed dates are convenient and put in the diary.
2. Book transport as early as possible.
3. Inform parents by letter. Email a copy of letter to the Administrator and Headteacher
4. Carry out pre-visit
5. Inform all staff that may be affected by the class being out of school; catering, music teachers, TAs, SEN support etc
6. Office to keep a record of contributions made by parents using class list
7. Ensure that there are enough parent/volunteer helpers at least 2 days before the visit – inform the headteacher if there is a potential shortfall in parent volunteer support so that this can be rectified.
8. Meet with parent/volunteer helpers on the day before visit (or nearest day available) to go through proposed travel arrangements, agenda and risk assessment plus any specific information that they need to know.
9. If parental cars are being used, then the office is to record that MOTs and insurance policies have been checked to confirm their scope and that they are up-to-date.

On the day of the Visit

1. Ensure each child has suitable clothing, equipment, lunch and refreshments (where necessary)
2. Collect first aid kit(s)
3. Take asthma pumps and Epipens as necessary
-

4. Brief supervising adults, including parents/volunteers as to any adjustments or changes
5. Ensure mobile phones are working, that the office has the number(s) and that they are switched on during the whole visit (mobile phones must not be used for personal calls and should only be used for communicating with the school during school visits).
6. Count number of pupils regularly, and always when changing locations
7. Count number of pupils regularly, and always when changing locations

If the head teacher and EVC have not agreed to the visit, have concerns about any aspect of the visit, or the necessary forms are not completed, then THE VISIT MUST NOT GO AHEAD.

Other relevant policies:

- Health and safety policy
- Safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy