



EDUCATIONAL VISITS OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL POLICY

Mission Statement:

“A community of learners of all ages from the local area committed to mutual service where all can flourish, be their best and work for the common good to the glory of God and his creation.”

APPROVED			
REVIEW DATE			
SIGNED PRINCIPAL		PRINT NAME	
SIGNED CHAIR OF GOVERNORS		PRINT NAME	

POLICY FOR EDUCATIONAL VISITS AND LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Introduction

This policy is written in accordance with the DfES Good Practice Guidance and supplement for Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits(HASPEV), 1998, Standards for Adventure, 2008 it considers the suggestions made in the DfES Learning Outside the classroom Manifesto, 2006, and is informed by the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom, Out and About Guidance document 2006. The recommendations from these sources are reflected in this policy.

Educational Visits and learning outside the classroom are an integral part of life at Hope Academy, furthering the education of the students. Educational visits and learning experiences outside the classroom are arranged for a student at Hope Academy not only so students learning is benefited but also so that knowledge, understanding and skills can be developed through experience that is not achievable in the classroom.

'When you step outside the classroom you have the opportunity to transform learning and raise achievement. Learning outside the classroom allows participants to learn in context, to learn by practical engagement, and to learn by personal discovery.' DCFS, Council for Learning outside the Classroom, Out and About Guidance 2006.

Educational visits and learning experiences outside of the classroom are defined as the use of alternative places other than the classroom for teaching and learning. Learning opportunities outside of the classroom commonly use areas such as the school grounds, the local environment, and places further afield. Educational visits and learning outside of the classroom is a school wide activity and should be encouraged at every opportunity.

Hope Academy places a strong emphasis on the importance and value of out of the classroom learning experiences. It is important to note that experiences should support the curriculum and targets in the Academy Strategic Intentions.

Children need to be well prepared, supported, resourced and informed for any learning experience to reap maximum benefit. All visits and learning outside of the classroom opportunities should be planned by a member of staff nominated as party leader, with the health, safety and welfare of the children of paramount importance.

Research has shown that educational visits and learning outside the classroom can raise achievement, increase motivation, and develop understanding in all children. Staff benefits from being given the opportunity to develop leadership skills; all staff must liaise with the designated senior leader, and site manager for risk assessment, concerning any arrangements for any visit.

All educational visits and learning experiences out of the classroom should be approved by the designated senior leader. In accordance with national recommendations, all educational visits and learning outside of the classroom experiences should consider specific learning outcomes and reflect the ethos of the school.

General Information

Early planning is essential for any visit.

Outdoor and adventurous activities should be within the ability of the children participating and the accompanying staff.

No amount of planning can guarantee that a visit will be totally incident free, but good planning and attention to health and safety measures can reduce the number of accidents and lessen the seriousness of those that do happen. The management of risk should be done in accordance with the Health and Safety policy at Hope Academy.

Staffing Requirements

Party Leader

If a qualified member of staff wishes to take a group of students out of school, they assume responsibility for the planning, risk assessment and risk management of the educational visit or experience as Party Leader outside of the classroom. They accept all reasonable responsibility for the well-being and safety of all participants attending the learning experience at all times.

If more than one class/school is involved in a visit, a party leader should be identified.

This is normally the staff member with the most appropriate experience, competence or most relevant qualification that is visit specific. For any Educational day visit or learning outside the classroom experience to go ahead, the ratios of staff to children must be correct and in accordance with best practice.

If a child requires support for a behavioural or medical need, an extra adult should accompany them on the visit, at the parents' expense.

The party leader is responsible for informing the parents and accompanying staff of their responsibilities.

Voluntary Helpers

Voluntary Helpers are selected carefully and are well known to staff and the senior leadership staff at Hope Academy.

All voluntary helpers should let the school know as soon as possible if they are unable to accompany the children for any reason, so that an appropriate replacement can be found. Any documentation already given to them should be returned to school.

Voluntary helpers are made aware of the extent of their responsibilities as detailed in the document, Areas of Responsibility for Voluntary Helpers.

Hope Academy does not permit staff and voluntary helpers to assume responsibility for any activity for which they are not qualified.

First Aid

On any visit, at least one of the supervisory staff will be a competent First Aider, holding a valid first-aid certificate and carrying an appropriate first-aid kit. This person will also be responsible for the inhalers and Epipens for all children attending the visit. Hope Academy takes advantage of a recognised first aid organisation for training resources and facilities for obtaining first-aid qualifications and revalidation, normally every three years.

Transport

Hope Academy has a policy that all coaches used are fitted with seat belts when booked. All seats should be forward facing and seat restraints should comply with legal requirements. The drivers should be suitably qualified and experienced.

On rare occasions, students may travel in staff or parents' cars. Children travelling thus should comply with the legal requirements. Parents sign consent to the travel arrangements which have been arranged for their child. Failure to provide a parental signature or written notification results in the child not travelling to the learning experience outside the school. Staff may only transport children if they have the parents' permission and a Business Insurance Policy.

Supervision

- At least two members of staff should supervise the students getting on and off the coach – one on the coach and one by the steps.
- Check numbers on outward and return journeys and at any point where children or adults disembark and subsequently embark onto the coach
- Do not let students sit on the first two seats facing the front window or next to the emergency exit wherever practicable.
- Ensure students are settled and seat belts fastened before setting off.
- Students **must** wear their seat belts throughout the journey unless told to remove them in emergency.
- When leaving the coach, check for lost property and litter.
- At least one member of staff should be on each coach or minibus and have a mobile phone with them.

Student Organisation

Students should be briefed in preparation for a visit, so that they obtain maximum benefit from the educational visit or learning outside the classroom experience.

Groups Lists are prepared for all staff and helpers on the visit. Lists should be collated prior to the visit and included with the risk assessment documentation handed to the designated senior staff in advance.

Copies of all groups should be given to the school office before departing on an educational visit or learning experience outside of the classroom.

The Party leader should maintain copies of the lists and carry them at all times when on the visit. Group leaders should keep a copy of their group at all times.

Student Behaviour

For all visits the students should be adequately briefed about the aims, expectations and codes of conduct for the visit. Students should be engaged in evaluating the risks of the tasks they are about to undertake. In all cases parents and students should be made aware of the standards of behaviour expected and the sanctions which may be used in cases where the standards are breached. In all cases the parent consent form requires that parents agree that the Academy reserves the right to send their son/daughter home at the parents' expense if he jeopardizes his/her safety, the safety of others or the good name of the Academy. For residential visits it may be appropriate to require parents and students to sign a Code of Conduct Agreement.

Adult: Student Ratios

At least 2 staff must accompany up to 30 students on any off-site visit. The gender of the students must be taken into account, if the group is mixed then at least 1 male and 1 female member of staff must accompany the students. If a single sex group, then a member of staff of the same gender must accompany the students.

For low risk activities and dependent on the age of the students the following ratios must be applied:

- Up to 1 day 2 staff for up to 30 students + 1 extra staff for every additional 15 students.
- Visits abroad 1 staff for every 10 students.

For high risk trips more generous staffing may be needed and should be considered by the event proposer and site manager.

Student Welfare

All accompanying adults have a duty of care. Colleagues should remember that they are in *loco parentis* at all times on the visit and thus are legally responsible for the well-being and safety of the children.

Children should never be on their own or isolated from their group.

When deciding groups, children should be considered individually according to need and placed with a suitable adult who can best enhance the learning experience. Groups and group leaders should be decided in advance and attached to the risk assessment.

Information Available at School

The Group Leader and designated senior staff at school hold the visit information for the duration of the visit. The information should contain details of:

- itinerary
- contact points
- mobile phone number(s)
- staff – Group leader, helpers, etc.
- emergency contacts
- copies of Parental Consent Form
- copies of any insurance documents, critical incident policy, contacts, etc.
- emergency procedures.

Reporting Accidents

The standard procedures for reporting accidents are followed at all times. Injuries to any person (adult or child) attending a learning experience outside the classroom must be recorded in accordance with HSE guidelines and school protocol.

Completion of the relevant forms detailing injury, location, time, date and treatment given is essential.

Emergencies

Despite good planning and organisation, emergencies that require immediate response by the leaders sometimes occur. The group leader ensures the safety of the group as a priority and contacts the appropriate emergency/rescue services. The Principal at Hope Academy should be contacted as soon as practicable.

Unrelated School Educational Visits

The guidelines in this document relate only to activities connected to the work of the school. Where a member of staff takes charge of children voluntarily on an activity out of school hours i.e. one which is not organised by the school (and not approved by the Governors) but involves children from the school – no responsibility is accepted by the Principal or the Governing Body at Hope Academy.

Full paperwork and processes supporting this policy are available in the staff handbook, and the staff shared area of the ICT network.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be led by a senior member of staff designated by the Principal and reviewed during the forthcoming academic year by the Governing Body.