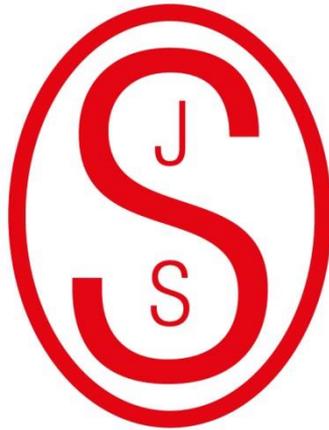


# **Saltersgate Junior School**



## **Educational Visits Policy**

Persons responsible for this policy: Mr P Chambers (Headteacher), Mrs a Webber (Chair of Governors)

## **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.

## **Purposes**

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.

Visits may also help children gain a wider knowledge and experience outside the school environment not necessarily directly linked to the curriculum, for example, through inter-school sports competitions, issues of personal safety (Crucial Crew) and Doncaster Book Club.

Wherever or whatever the venue, teachers should ensure that the educational benefits to the children are maximised.

## **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 Saltersgate Junior School.

## **Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council (D.M.B.C.)**

D.M.B.C. have written and distributed comprehensive guidelines for schools to follow in the Doncaster district, with regards to educational visits. These guidelines will form the basis for any visit undertaken at our school.

## **Education Visits Coordinator (EVC)**

The EVC at Saltersgate will endeavour to ensure that:

- A suitable group leader has been appointed;
- all necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins. (This applies even when the EVC is not going on the visit);
- 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 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;
- they have the address and phone number of the visit's venue and have a contact name;
- that they have 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.
- Follow guidelines set out by D.M.B.C.

### **Group Leader**

One teacher (or HTLA if a category A visit), the group leader, is responsible overall for the supervision and conduct of the visit, and should have been appointed by the Head Teacher or EVC.

The Group Leader should:

- appoint a deputy if necessary;
- be able to control and lead pupils of the relevant age range;
- be suitable 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 with the EVC 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).
- 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;
- they have the address and phone number of the visit's venue and have a contact name;
- that they have 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.
- Follow guidelines set out by D.M.B.C.

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

Teachers on school-led visits act as employees of the LEA 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 Head Teacher and Governors if some of their time on the visit falls outside normal hours.

Teacher 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.
- 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.
- Follow guidelines set out by D.M.B.C.

### **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;
- should not undertake any task that they fear or that they think will be dangerous.
- Inform a teacher or adult if they feel unwell or if they believe another child to be unwell.

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

### **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 residential 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;
- give the group leader relevant information about their child's health which might be relevant to the visit.

### **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 EVC 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 Head Teacher/EVC 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 Head Teacher/EVC.

### **Risk Assessment**

A risk assessment should always be carried out before setting off on a visit, using the website, as directed by D.M.B.C. (New system September 2016)The D.M.B.C guidelines will decide the adult: child ratio for each visit. 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?

The group leader and other supervisors should continually reassess the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action if pupils are in danger.

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. They should also ask for a risk assessment from the venue. 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 at least one trained first-aider should attend with 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 EVC 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;
- duration and nature of the journey;
- type of 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.

Ratios are set out in the D.M.B.C guidance and should be followed stringently.

Where a high adult: pupil ratio is required, it is not always feasible to use school staff alone. Parents with appropriate DBS 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.

If an adult does not hold an up-to-date DBS form, they may still attend to ensure proper ratio numbers, but must never be left alone at any point with any children. Adults volunteering for residential visits must have an up-to-date DBS form completed.

<sup>1</sup>Parents volunteering to accompany a school visit are allowed to be with their own child. If their child needs medical or any other individual attention during the visit, then the parent must contact a member of staff to take responsibility for the remaining members of the group whilst dealing with their child. Parents looking after groups of children should always be in sight of a member of the teaching staff.

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, with the group leader having overall responsibility.

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 LEA 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 rendezvous points and tell pupils what to do if they become separated from the party.

### **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.

### **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.

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.

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<sup>1</sup> 28<sup>th</sup> September 2011

Confirmation from Dawn Wheatley (DMBC).

### **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 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.

### **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.

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

The Head Teacher/EVC 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.

### **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 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.

### **Parental consent**

Saltergate Junior School will seek consent for:

- day visits;
- adventure activities;
- visits abroad;
- other residential visits.

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. D.M.B.C.'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 (bedrooms) 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;

- 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 Saltersgate, 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 and cone off that area. Children will not be allowed out of that area without an adult present;
- 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 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.

### **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 Saltersgate children.

### **Farm visits**

Saltersgate recognises 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;

- 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.

Version	Date	Changes	Approved