



**TATSFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Outdoor Education and Off-site  
Educational Visits**

**May 2021**

# Outdoor Education and Off-site Educational Visits

## VISION STATEMENT

Children, staff and parents working actively in partnership to enable all children to realise their full potential

### **We aim to help our children to**

- develop into happy and confident individuals with a secure foundation in learning that will last throughout their lives
- appreciate and understand moral and religious beliefs and develop a respectful attitude for the views of others
- develop enquiring minds, be confident to ask questions and take risks with a desire to achieve
- be independent learners and thinkers who are able to seek solutions creatively and co-operatively
- be caring, resilient and responsible individuals

## **Aim High, Achieve More**



### **Introduction**

Tatsfield Primary School provides many opportunities for its children to enrich and enhance their learning through use of Outdoor Education and Off-site Educational Visits. This encompasses residential activities, environmental studies, sports, physical and cultural activities and adventurous activities.

We strongly believe that off-site education enhances the children's learning experience by helping them to:

- broaden horizons
- have fun
- raise self-esteem
- make decisions
- build relationships with staff and children
- have opportunities to risk take in a safe environment
- understand risk
- experience new cultures
- raise aspirations
- take responsibility
- be motivated
- be included
- have a chance to share
- experience activities that could develop into lifelong leisure pursuits
- be creative
- be independent
- take part in invaluable citizenship experiences
- experience team building
- experience success

- learn to cope with failure
- live and work with others
- see the curriculum come to life
- experience magic moments and create memories for life

The value of off-site educational visits is well recognised by the Governing body and fully supported throughout the school. It is emphasised that a culture of safety must prevail and there is a need for careful planning and adherence to statutory procedures. Off-site educational visits must be well managed, information communicated and responsibilities recognised.

#### **Aims:**

- To provide a range of Educational Visits that will enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for children
- To establish a clear and coherent structure for the cost effective management of Educational Visits
- To plan, conduct and review Educational Visits within procedures designed to secure worthwhile benefits for the children in a healthy and safe environment
- To manage the programme of Educational visits in a way that least disrupts the educational interests of children both involved and not involved

#### **In order to do this the School will**

- Regularly monitor and evaluate existing potential Educational Visit opportunities to sustain and develop a range of activities with well-defined educational and recreational benefits
- Has appointed a school Educational Visits Co-ordinator with responsibility for the implementation of agreed procedures and risk assessment, in liaison with LA and officers
- Operate the Educational Visits Procedure, and follow the advice and guidance contained within the following significant publications:
  - Surrey County Council Guidance for Off-Site Visits and Related Activities (Including DofE) with links to [OEAP National Guidance](#) & EVOLVE 2020
  - The Department for Education and Skills (DfE) published '[Health and Safety on educational Visits](#)'
  - The [Health and Safety Executive](#) 'School trips and outdoor learning activities: Tackling the health and safety myths'
- Consider the timing, frequency and staffing of Educational Visits and their impact on the educational progress of children
- Manage Educational Visits so that they are available to all children who would benefit from them, taking account of the level of voluntary parental contribution necessary to support the activity, and special provision that may be necessary for students with special needs

## Roles and Responsibilities

The Local Governing Body satisfies itself that the appropriate procedures, risk assessments, and control measures are in place and that the documented guidance notes are being followed. All new off-site visits that are residential, abroad, or hazardous must be approved by the Local Governing Body and reported to the Tandridge Learning Trust. Such approval must be recorded in the minutes of the Local Governing Body.

The Head Teacher is delegated by the Governing Body to approve all off-site educational visits of a perceived low risk, local, daily or regular nature.

The Head Teacher will also:

- Ensure adequate child protection procedures are in place
- Approve the group leader for every visit, ensuring that they have experience in supervising the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively
- Ensure that Criminal Records Bureau disclosures are in place where necessary

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) The Educational Visits coordinator ensures that all off-site activities follow the correct procedures. The person with these responsibilities will approve the group leader for every visit and monitors the written risk assessments to ensure good practice. In addition, the following responsibilities and duties are undertaken:

- Support the group leader in identifying the purpose for the visit and the selection, training and briefing of appropriate supervising adults and volunteer helpers
- Be satisfied that the group leader is competent to led the visit
- Discuss with the group leader (usually the Class Teacher) the planning of the visit, the risk assessment and review the visit details after the visit
- Help the group leader to write the risk assessment for the visit
- Ensure that DBS disclosures are current for staff and helpers
- Arrange an Emergency Contact Duty Officer and draw up proper procedures to be followed in such an event
- Keep records and make reports of accidents and “near accidents”
- Review and regularly monitor procedures
- Liaise with the LA Outdoor Education Adviser to ensure the proposed residential visit complies with the LA regulations.

The Group Leader is responsible for identifying the purpose of the visit and following the checklist published in the [OEAP National Guidance](#) 3.3a.

The Group Leader must be identified for each visit. If the Group Leader is a qualified teacher, s/he must have two years teaching experience. However, the Group Leader may be a competent adult who is not a Teacher or member of staff. The EVC does not have to be the Group Leader nor go on the visit but might wish to accompany the party on some occasions.

The Group Leader will plan the off-site visit, write the risk assessment and review the risks after the visit. In law he/she would be expected to have a higher duty of care than parent helpers or support staff helpers and should act as a normal, prudent parent. The employer i.e. **Tandridge Learning Trust** has ultimate responsibility and will support the group leader. It is however very important that the group leader has acted “with care as befits a trained and experienced professional” and has followed the school’s policy for educational visits.

The pupils must never have “free time”, all activities should be supervised in some way. If some adult members of the group are having “time out” there must continue to be the correct level of supervision for all pupils. The EVC can be asked for help with any aspect of organising an educational visit.

The Group Leader will:

- ensure the Headteacher and EVC have approved the visit
- ensure that Government and LA guidelines and school policy is followed
- ensure child protection issues are addressed and that helpers have a current DBS clearance
- make a full risk assessment have it approved by the EVC and share it with all those involved in the visit.
- have a “Plan B” if “Plan A” becomes too risky
- ensure all volunteers know what their role is and that they have a responsibility to carry out that role.
- arrange for appropriate adult pupil ratios
- if appropriate give each adult helper a small group to supervise and insist on lots of counting of heads
- insist that all helpers **actively supervise at all times**
- give all helpers generic instructions which will be in the form of a leaflet “Information for Adult Helpers on Educational Visits” ([appendix 1](#)) and specific written instructions such as names of pupils, place of visit, purpose of visit, session times, meeting points, specific medical needs of any pupil in their care.
- ensure that one adult is a competent first –aider
- ensure group lists, medical forms and consent forms are completed and available on the visit
- arrange for medical needs and special educational needs are met
- all SEN, music, office and other staff are informed of times of visits which will affect other provision in school
- the school diary is up-to-date with visit dates and times
- a financial account and costs for the trip have been made
- if on a residential visit, conduct a fire drill if the establishment does not do this as a matter of course.

Participants are encouraged to consider risks involved in an off-site educational activity and to assist in the design of appropriate risk management strategies that support their learning.

### **Risk Assessments**

A risk assessment is necessary for all off-site visits. Significant risks and their control measures will need to be recorded and filed with the EVC.

This will take account of:

- Generic risks as published in this document and the LA Regulations and Notes of Guidance for Off-site Activities  
Generic activity risk assessments which are likely to apply to the activity wherever it takes place, for example adult to pupil ratios, insurance cover (Academies RPA insurance covers all our visits but not use of parents’ cars)
- Event Specific Risks as identified from a pre-visit or thorough knowledge or experience of the environment, accommodation, the leader’s competence, the group and other factors such as transport.  
Visit/site specific risk assessments will differ from place to place or group to group
- On-going risks identified by the professional staff responding to changing circumstances and the success of planned activity and procedures. The participants and staff will be fully briefed on the purpose and the risk assessment control measures.  
Ongoing risk assessments take account of, for example staff or pupil illness, changes in weather, availability of preferred activity

In the latter category changing circumstances can radically alter the safety of an activity and staff should always err on the side of caution.

When writing a risk assessment:

- look for the risks/hazards
- decide who might be harmed and how
- evaluate the risks and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done to reduce the risk to an acceptable level
- Can the group leader guarantee that these safety measures can be provided
- What steps will be taken in an emergency
- record your findings
- continue to review your assessment and revise if necessary.

When undertaking a risk assessment, a number of variables need to be taken into account:

- the nature of the activity
- the hazards of the environment being visited
- the numbers, experience, qualifications and quality of accompanying staff and volunteers
- the number of pupils involved
- the group members age, sex, ability, health and general behaviour
- previous experience of pupils in having off-site visits
- the time of day and time of year
- the travel arrangements

Risk Assessment forms should be completed and lodged with the EVC when risks are perceived as significant. External providers will have their own risk assessment documents that can be used to help in this process.

### **Procedure for Off-Site Educational Visits**

To ensure proper good practice and compliance with the necessary regulations it is expected that:

All group leaders will familiarise themselves with the published advice and guidance.

Training for group leaders can be arranged to include all aspects of supervision, ongoing risk assessments (including being prepared to stop an activity that has become too hazardous) and how to deal with an emergency.

Parental Consent. Copies must be available for the Emergency Contact and the Group Leader to take on the visit.

Off-site Activity Monitoring Form. This must be completed for all residential visits and for those that are either visits abroad or for hazardous pursuits. It will need to be completed by the EVC and signed by the Headteacher and submitted to Evolve at least one month in advance of the visit.

These types of off-site activity also need the Local Governing Body's approval.

### **Preliminary Visit**

Wherever possible the group leader should undertake a preliminary 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 children

If it is not feasible to carry out a preliminary visit, a minimum measure should be to contact the venue, seeking assurances about the venue's appropriateness for the visiting group and viewing the website. In addition, it may be worth seeking views from other schools who have recently visited the venue.

## **Supervision**

As mentioned the recommended adult: pupil ratio is 1:2 for under-fives (Early Years), 1:4 for other year R children 1:6 for Years 1, 2 and 3, and 1:10 for Years 4, 5 and 6 on both day and residential visits. However, other factors should be considered and the supervision ratio increased. These factors could be:

- the age, sex and ability of the group
- the nature of the activity
- the experience and quality of accompanying staff and volunteers
- the special educational needs and medical needs of the group
- the duration of the activity/visit
- the type of accommodation when it is a residential activity
- competence and behaviour of pupils
- first-aid cover available

## **Transport**

Appropriate transport must always be booked and guidance will be given by the EVC. If travelling by coach children should not sit in the front seats of the coach, seats by the emergency exits or in the middle back row seat and that all seat belts are fastened.

## **Insurance**

All visits are covered by the Academies RPA insurance. However, transportation of pupils in parents' vehicles is not covered and the following details need to be obtained from parents:

- proof of valid driving licence
- current tax and MOT
- insurance for carrying passengers on a school off-site visit

## **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 there should be at least one trained first-aider 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.

## **Discipline**

All educational visits will be conducted according to the school's behaviour policy. Clear standards will be established prior to the visit and conveyed to the pupils, volunteers and parents. Because of the increased risks likely to be encountered in a different environment, the opportunity for inappropriate behaviour may be increased. It is therefore important that discipline is effective, absolute and continuous.

If the school believes that other pupils would be in danger, on an educational visit, from the behaviour of a pupil, the school must conduct a risk assessment and inform the parents of the pupil concerned. Before a school reaches this decision all possible considerations and reasonable adjustments must be made. The Headteacher must carry out a full risk assessment before coming to this decision and communicate it to the child's parents.

The Local Governing Body and Tandridge Learning Trust will support the school's decision not to include a child if other children would be put in danger by including the child.

## **Pupils with Special Educational Needs including Special Medical Needs**

A Teacher can refuse to be responsible for a child's medical needs. Where appropriate the school should train staff to deal with pupils' medical needs e.g. use of asthma inhalers or epipens. If a pupil requiring specific medical needs is to take part in an off-site activity the usual procedure for administration of medicines should be followed. Where a

pupil has more serious medical needs and the adult (parent) usually responsible for the child is unable to accompany the child the school must give careful consideration to the pupil being included in the visit.

When the school is undertaking a residential visit the usual authorisation for the Party Leader to act for their child in the case of an emergency should be sought. If parents are unable to give this authorisation, the Headteacher may decide that the risk in taking the child would be too great and this may preclude the child from taking part. However the Headteacher must carry out a full risk assessment before coming to this decision and communicate it to the child's parents.

### **Emergency**

The Group Leader should follow the school's emergency procedures as stated in the school's "Emergency Plan". If emergency treatment is required and the senior member of staff designated to contact parents is unavailable, the Group Leader should telephone the child's parents and let them make decisions. If this is not possible then the Group Leader should hand over all decision making to the medical staff.

### **Voluntary Help – (See appendix 1)**

The success of an educational visit often relies upon the use of voluntary helpers. Indeed most visits would not take place if parents and friends of the school did not offer their services. The role of the volunteers must be carefully considered and their legal responsibilities understood. To offer voluntary help does not negate legal responsibility.

Volunteers should:

- be made aware of their responsibilities
- be aware of their role on the visit
- make sure they know the names of children for whom they are responsible
- know that they must follow the instructions of the group leader
- Have an enhanced DBS check (If required)

### **Communications**

The Group leader should ensure that parents/Carers are given information about the purpose and details of the visit and are invited to any briefing sessions for longer visits and for all residential stays. The group leader should also tell parents how they can help prepare their child for the visit. Special arrangements may be necessary for parents for whom English is a second language.

The following information on matters that might affect pupils' health and safety is useful to parents, and will be included in letters 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
- clothing, money and equipment to be taken

Parents must:

- complete all requested forms and information including; signing the consent form, giving emergency contact number(s) and relevant information about their child's health which might be relevant to the trip.

If a parent refuses to give permission for a child to go on a visit, alternative National Curriculum work that was developed during the visit must be provided in another form for the pupil in school.

### **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 specific rules for the visit
- 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
- rendezvous procedures if applicable

### **Voluntary Contributions**

The accepted policy for charging for educational visits applies. No financial commitment should be agreed until all relevant approvals have been achieved.

### **Evaluation Report:**

On return the Group Leader must report to the EVC and, where necessary, an evaluation report should be completed in order to achieve any learning about a 'near miss' or where an incident took place but fortunately did not require the completion of an Accident/Incident report form. Perhaps such a form was completed at the venue, however, this does not remove the need to place such an occurrence on the record at the 'home' establishment. A general evaluation of the visit will inform future visits and may be a useful check on the value of the risk assessments undertaken.

Policy agreed: May 2021

Review due: May 2024